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THE
M A R A U D E R.

AN
ORIGINAL TALE,

OF THE
Seventeenth Century.

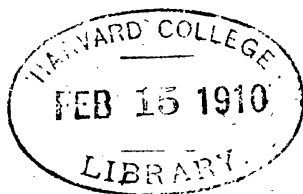
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— Deep in a murky cave's recess,
Lav'd by oblivion's listless stream, and fenced
By shelving rocks and intermingled horrors
Of yew and cypress shade from all intrusion
Of busy noon-tide beam, the monarch sits
In unsubstantial majesty enthron'd !

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THE MARAUDER.

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CHAPTER I.

During the war of the revolution, some of the small Islands scattered around the eastern waters, bordering the Atlantic and situated in Fisher's Island sound, were infested by a band of lawless characters, who lived by plunder. The easy communication from these islands to the shores of Connecticut, near the banks of the Thames river in New-London county, afforded vast facilities for carrying on a nefarious business.

On a cold windy November night, when the black clouds hung in majesty in the heavens and enwrapped the earth in darkness, a small boat with ten men which had been buffeting the waves, landed on the beach near the entrance of Mystic river. Staving the boat to pieces in which they landed, several trunks were conveyed to a pile of rocks, and secreted among the cavities, where they were covered with seaweed. The leader of this party was muffled in a large cloak, the folds of which completely enveloped his masculine form. As the party separated, each one armed with a broad sword and pistols, the chief presented them with a sealed packet, when they left the beach.

The leader of the gang waited until his companions were lost from his sight in the darkness around when he stood leaning against a broken fragment of rock. "I must see Ovando at the morning's dawn," muttered he to himself, "and trust to my faithful companions for securing his infant."

Musing a few moments, he took from his pocket a small clasp knife, and gashing his bosom, stained his vestments with blood that flowed from the wounds, then wrapping his mantle around him, hastened to the lone building which at a short distance overlooked the shore. The mansion was deserted as he expected, and the horses of his companions were safe in the stable of the dwelling. This old ruined building which had for years afforded a rendezvous for himself and Edwin, was fast falling to decay.— This is a safe place for our business, thought he, as he opened a secret door which conducted him to the vaults below, and the hounds must tack close ere they discover the spoils of Venter and Edwin.

At this instant the sound of footsteps struck upon his ears in the room above. Closing the subterranean vault, he ascended to where the sounds proceeded.

It was Edwin, his companion, who had entered, whom he instantly recognized.

"Have you prepared the horses," inquired Venter. "We are now ready," replied Edwin, "Gregory accompanies me ; Talbot and Alason will await us at the mouth of the river."

"'Tis well," replied the leader, "be faithful to your trust, and remember the reward."

Soon the thundering sound of the horses' hoofs were heard, and gradually died away in the distance as they galloped from the house.

"Little does Ovando think that at the rising of the sun, it is a deliberate villain that is to meet him on the confines of the Cedar-swamp ; but he is too valuable a companion to let slip, and though honour is a traitor to my bosom, yet I know 'tis loyal to his. I will fulfil my promise for this once, and then unmask myself to him. His hoarded gold must shine in our coffers ere he sees his first born."

This soliloquy of the Marauder chief was interrupted by the distant roar of a cannon, which thundered from a vessel of war at a distance off ; he started from his meditations, and brought forth his horse departed to meet his deluded victim by the side of the Ce-

dar-swamp, on the western outskirts of the city of New-London.

To explain the foregoing, it becomes necessary now to bring the hero of the tale before our readers :—

In the 17th century, ere the yoke of a British king had galled and chased the ancestors of our present generation, and aroused that spirit of rebellion which like a burning torrent burst forth with resistless fury and spread throughout the land, beside an impetuous river which roared through a deep valley, hemmed in by a lofty range of hills, stood the rustic dwelling which gave birth to the intrepid Ovando.

The loud thunder of the rushing waters of the Willemantic, tumbling over its rocky bed, had ceased to trouble the slumbers of the inmates of this habitation. Inured to the hoarse sound of the torrent stream which in one continual strain struck upon the ear, they reposed peacefully amidst the din around.

The father of Ovando, a descendant of the pilgrims who in 1620 braved the tempest's blast on the ocean—quit their native land, and sought a refuge from the iron hand of despotism to enjoy the lights of conscience in this new discovered country.

He inherited all the virtues which distinguished his ancestors, and like the aged oak standing on the common, was the only remaining branch of a numerous family, which in the war with the savage tribes under the reign of the arch King Philip, had been scattered through the colonies of New England.—The winds of seventy winters had silvered the locks of his youth, and age with its accumulated afflictions had bent his manly and once erect form towards the earth. Standing as it were on the confines of the tomb, he relinquished his labours into the hands of his son.

Sequestered from the busy scenes of the world, and unused to the cares which harrass and perplex mankind, Ovando enjoyed in the retirement of his

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native valley, all that pleasure in life which a consciousness of serving in the decline of their lives, parents who were near and dear to him. But alas, the relentless scythe of time cut off his hopes and blasted for a season the morning of his joys. A few rolling months saw his aged parents consigned to the silent earth, and the period had arrived when alone and friendless, the stern decrees of fate ordained him to change the place of his residence. The accumulated wealth of an industrious parent, added to the sale of his possessions, had rendered him an object worthy the hand of the only daughter of a wealthy landholder: the beautiful Almyra, who in days past and gone, the mutual accents of love had inspired with blissful dreams of happiness in each others arms.

At the altar of Hymen, he received the object of his choice; and the halcyon days of connubial happiness had just begun to dawn, when the dormant sparks of freedom, which lay smothered by the hand of tyranny, began, like an ignited match, to blaze throughout the colonies of New-England.

Accompanied by Almyra, he determined to change his residence and forever quit the retired habitation of his youth. Unknown beyond the limits of his native place, his ardent soul thirsted for renown.—The day of departure at length arrived, and the towering hills and shady valleys of their youthful days were lost in the distance of surrounding objects.—Their destination was uncertain and the shades of night overtook the travellers on the extended plains of Poquetanoc.

A few years previous, Ovando had been to the borders of the sea shore, and on his return had been peculiarly struck with the romantic situation of a lone building, which stood near the plains where night had so unexpectedly overtaken him. To add to the unpleasantness of their situation, the sky became overcast with portentous clouds, which denoted a coming storm.

The distant twinkling of a light soon announced to them that a habitation was near, which revived the drooping spirits of Almyra, who had with terror,

shrunk fearfully at every passing breeze that hissed over the plain.

Ovando and Almyra hurried towards the assylum that presented itself before them. The noise of the horses, as they drove up to the lone building, brought an aged female to the door, a tall slender figure bearing a rush light opened it as they arrived at the threshold.

"Can we come in, good woman?" asked Ovando. With a thousand apologies, old Monomia desired them to enter, while she called her grandson Taber, to see to the gentleman's horses.

"We were benighted on the plain unexpected," said Ovando, "if you will let us stay here until the morrow, ample remuneration shall be made. Almyra is fatigued, and it is utterly impossible for us to proceed any further."

"Stay!—yes," cried Monomia, "I have not the heart to turn any one away from my door, much less a lady who appears fainting with fatigue. Make yourself contented while I prepare something for your refreshment." Although age had wrinkled the brows of Monomia and furrowed her cheeks that once bloomed as the rose, still there was a fire in her eyes that shone with peculiar lustre. Soon was the table spread with a clean white napkin,—a strong cup of tea was prepared which with toast, cake, new made butter and cheese, appeared a luxury too tempting to be withstood by our travellers, who had fasted for the most part of the day.

By the side of Ovando, Almyra was unconscious of any harm—tenderly devoted to each other they had planned a rural, sequestered habitation, where, sequestered from the bustle of the world, they could spend their days in peace and quietness. Ovando enquired for the necessary information respecting the deserted mansion on the bank of the river, which he resolved the next morning to purchase, and in the retirement of its situation spend his days.

The lonely dwelling which then gave them shelter was occupied by the widow of an old soldier who, in serving his country had been slain in battle leaving his widow the only remains of his once va-

possessions, consisting of this small dwelling and a few acres of land. Mother Monomia, for by that appellation she was generally known by the surrounding inhabitants, had for years resided on the spot, and was considered the physician of the village, which consisted of a few houses not far distant.

Fatigue compelled Almyra to retire to rest, while the good woman prepared a couch for Ovando on the floor for the night;—not having any accommodations for lodgers she had generously offered a part of her own bed for Almyra.

On the next morning Ovando arose early, and sought the lone dwelling—its romantic situation pleased him, and having undergone some late repairs was then in a tenable state, insulated from all others, it stood almost embosomed within a deep woods.

On returning to the residence of Monomia, he made arrangements with her for keeping his Almyra for a few days while he visited the city on the sea-coast. The owner of the hamlet was willing to part with his property, which was purchased by Ovando, and he hastened his journey, leaving Almyra in charge of the good woman Monomia.

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CHAPTER II.

The golden rays of the sun faintly shed their beams around, as like a globe of fire, it sunk behind the distant forest trees, when Ovando crossed the bridge which over-arched the Poquetanoc, and pursued his course on the eastern side of the Thames, towards the seashore several miles of his journey were completed, and the waters of Fisher's Island sound were seen at a distance, as he ascended on his route, the steep side of Candlewood-hill. The moon was just rising from behind a grey cloud when a horseman with speed galloped past him. The fiery movements of the spirited steed on which he was mounted, seemed to baffle the skill of the rider,

who in descending the hill was thrown from his seat, while the impetuous animal dashed through the trees, and entered the forest on the left of the path.

Ovando turned his horse and spurred him to the spot where the horsemen had been dismounted, and springing to the ground, took him in his arms. He was senseless from the shock which he had received, but no bruise seemed to have injured him in his fall. Stunned only with its violence, he soon recovered; and thanking Ovando for his attention, enquired for his horse.

"He has entered the thicket," replied Ovando.—The stranger looked earnestly at him for a moment, and appeared intensely thinking of some way of continuing the conversation, when Ovando generously offered to share a part of his own horse with him, until they reached the neighbouring village of Pequonoc.

"A soldier must submit to misfortunes," said the stranger, "and though we sometimes trouble those whom we defend, our necessities compel us frequently to accept favours from our most bitter enemies."

"You are a soldier, then," replied Ovando.—"Yes," continued the stranger, "my duties are those of a soldier, but——" Ovando fixed his penetrating eyes on the face of the stranger,—“but what,” said he. “I hope you have not sullied the name of that honourable calling!”

"No, my preserver," said he, "but we are strangers, and I hope for better acquaintance. Dare you meet me at to-morrow's setting sun, on yonder shore near the lone building which overlooks the sound."

The truth flashed like a beam of lightning upon the mind of Ovando. "Wretch!" exclaimed he, seizing him by the throat. "Coolly sir," replied the soldier, as he drew a pistol from his bosom, "the days of Vantor are not so short—unhand me instantly, ere I add another victim to my already too numerous catalogue of slain."

"I was mistaken," said Ovando, letting go his hold.—“At to-morrow's setting sun, I will meet you.” “Enough,” replied the soldier, and a smile danced over his features, lighting his eye with

unusual fire. "Remember that it is alone we must meet. Beware of deceiving me;" and as he uttered these words, he darted into the recesses of the forest which lined both sides of the road.

"Yes," muttered Ovando, "I will meet this man. The mystery which envelopes his actions shall be unfolded to me;" and banishing as much as possible the thoughts which crowded on his mind, pursued his solitary journey to the city.

At the house of his brother-in-law, Mr. C's he was received with pleasure; but it was in vain they urged him to tarry—the unsettled state of the country induced him to hasten his return, which for the promised meeting on the shore, he would have accomplished immediately.

The meridian sun had attained its full height on the next day, when Ovando took his leave of the family of Mr. C. and crossed the river. He stopped at the principal Inn, intending to wait until the time drew nigh, ere he proceeded to the destined spot.

At length, starting, he crossed the Grotton heights, and by a winding course reached the shore. The waves were lashing its rocky bound sides when he dismounted from his horse. The small islands which speckled the immense waters of Fisher's and long-Island sound, appeared enveloped in a thick fog which rose from the waters, scarcely admitting a distinct view whether they were islands or black clouds hovering over the mass of waters.

Ovando waited until the sun sunk like a globe of fire beyond the western hills, and the pale-faced moon was just emerging from behind a dark cloud, when from among the distant rocks that lay promiscuously along the shore, he saw the figure of a man coming towards him. Enveloped in a large mantle which covered his whole person, he strode to the spot where Ovando stood reclining against a rock.

"Faithful to your engagement, my friend, I perceive," said the stranger, putting forth his hand towards Ovando, "Yes, stranger," replied he, "the

word of Ovando, like his oath, is binding.—Come, let us to our business.”

“Be it so,” replied the stranger—“Follow me.”

He ascended the steep bank of the shore with rapidity, while Ovando, with much exertion climbed up after him. On their gaining the top they proceeded silent and cautiously towards the lone building. He pushed open the door and they both entered.

“Here is my quarters,” said the soldier, “and it is a garrison well stored—Hark ye ! Ovando, I have long been in pursuit of some congenial spirit to aid me, and one to whom I could impart the secrets of the Philosopher’s stone. Your countenance has struck me that it is an indication of your heart, and that boldness and intrepidity are characteristics of it. I have been a soldier, and am now one ; but the commander whom I once served under, dared to trample on me, and arouse my anger. Insulted and degraded, I abandoned him,—deserted his legions and am now free.

Ovando listened to the Marauder while he continued, “I have unhesitatingly, and in language too plain to be misunderstood, unfolded to you my occupation. My life is, as it were in your hands—and should you betray me, I swear—— “Swear not at all !” exclaimed Ovando, “your secret is safe with me.”

A noise like the sound of horses’ feet clattering on the ground was heard approaching the house.—“Hah !” cried the Marauder, “we are discovered, follow me,” He led Ovando through a secret door, which communicated to the cellar of the building, where, touching a spring in the side of the cellar, an opening appeared in the wall, into which they both entered. Through a subterranean passage, they groped their way for a considerable distance, until at length it widened, and they descended into a small square room, lit by a solitary lamp, which stood burning on a rough oak table, on which was spread writing materials. “We are safe here,” said he, and swinging a partition which appeared as forming one

side of the vaulted room, displayed another dark narrow passage which appeared full of goods of every description.

It was here in this gloomy place, in which the light of heaven never beamed, that the once virtuous Ovando, swore to link his fate with a marauder.— Though his soul shrunk from crime, and abhorred the violators of the laws of his country ! yet tempted by avarice he signed the contract which joined him with the marauder ; and in pledge of fidelity they exchanged their rings—the sight of which on any occasion, was a token of fulfilling their solemn oaths.

The spot which Ovando had chosen for his residence at the junction of the Poquetanoc and Thames rivers, which empties into the ocean through Fisher's Island sound, was a retired spot sequestered from the busy world ; and on the romantic banks of that rapid stream stood the rustic dwelling which he had purchased. Delighted nature seemed to smile on the cultivated fields, hills, and meadows which struck upon the eye at a distance on the opposite side of the river.

A place more suited to the mind of Ovando and Almyra, could not have been found—the beautiful landscapes on one side and the dark forest on the other, rendered the scenes pleasing and varied.— The eagle soaring through fields of ether, often descended from its lofty excursions, and perched on the trees of the forest, which reared their tall tops at the back of the hamlet. The night-bird screamed within the hidden recesses of the dark woods which bordered the shore of the Thames, while the coiling serpent crept among the deep tangled-wood, charming the feathered songsters that frequented the dell at the right, and which wound its way to the shore.

A minute description of this residence was furnished by Ovando, who was secretly to aid and assist the Marauder. Under the semblance of collecting supplies for the army, they were to rove through the country. A part of the property of Ovando, was to be deposited into the hands of Vantor for secret purposes, and a day appointed for a meeting on the con-

finer of the Cedar-swamps. The arch companion of Ovando had learnt from him the prospect of his becoming a father, and concerted a plan for seizing the infant for security, in case virtue should predominate over his rash engagements.

The business of Ovando being completed, they silently left the vaulted room and continued through the dark passage which terminated among the rocks on the shore. Ovando found his horse and pursued his way towards Poquetanoc. The darkness of the night somewhat impeded his course, but letting the reins of his horse lie loose upon his neck, he slowly moved on ruminating on the sudden events which had occurred to him since leaving Almyra.

At length about midnight he reached the dwelling of Mother Monomia, fearful of disturbing the aged woman, he cautiously unfastened the door and entered the house, where, throwing himself on the floor of the outer room, was through fatigue quickly locked in the arms of sleep. Monomia had arose early, and on entering the room was startled at the sight of a man lying wrapped in his cloak upon the floor,—but instantly recognized him to be Ovando, whom Almyra and herself had sat up at a late hour for—and unwilling to disturb him, she pursued her occupation about the house until Almyra arose, who with joy embraced her returned husband. He instantly awoke, and set about taking possession of his new habitation, which was then ready to receive him.

The good woman Monomia was the only companion of Almyra in her solitary residence. Months had elapsed, & the time drew near when the gentle Almyra was to become a mother. Ovando was occasionally absent, but not a murmur of complaint was uttered by his tender wife.

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CHAPTER III.

November, the year of——gave birth to the infant Myra, the daughter of Almyra and Ovando: On
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the evening previous to the birth of the infant, a loud and repeated knocking was heard at the back entrance of the house, and the impatient steps of some one was heard pacing to and fro, as if anxiously waiting for admittance.

"Who can want shelter at this lone hour?" whispered the expected mother, who had retired to bed, and the husband setting beside, was writing in a large folio. Gathering up his writing materials, and hastily putting them in his desk, he took the lamp and went to the door; a bolt fastened it which he drew back with caution.

"Can you shelter me this night," said a man who appeared wrapped in a dark mantle, "the morning beams shall see me depart.—I only ask for shelter from the night-blast, which piercing chills my wearied frame."

"Certainly," replied Ovando, and ushered his guest into the parlour, where, throwing a faggot on the almost dying embers, a cheerful blaze soon sent its reviving heat into the room. "Almyra has retired to rest," said our host, "and I hardly know what to lay before you, except a cold cut, and a mug of home-brewed ale." "Any thing will answer, good man," said the guest, as he unbuttoned his watch-cloak, and throwing open its ample folds displayed the military costume of his dress. "A soldier seldom gets good cheer while on fatigue, except by chance."

A table was soon spread by Ovando, and a sirloin of beef with its appendages placed before him,—a mug of homebrewed stuff and a bottle of Cogniac graced his fare, which, after thoroughly warming himself, he did ample justice to. The host partook in part with him, and introduced his pipe and tobacco. They were comfortably seated, watching the curling smoke as it rose in columns from their pipes, when a gentle tap was heard at the window; the suddenness of which seemed to alarm the soldier, who starting up, drew his steel and placed it upon the table beside him.

The rap was soon repeated again at the door, when Ovando arose taking the light, asked who was there; "a friend," was the reply, and he unfastened the door. A tall masculine figure stood before him—a slouching

hat overshadowed his features, which Ovando thought he could perceive somewhat agitated and confused. "Am I the first that has called on you this evening?" asked the stranger as he stepped hastily within the door. "Permit me" said Ovando in a determined voice, "to inquire your business at this late hour before you proceed any further—my dwelling is not an assignation house, I hope!"

At this instant the soldier appeared at the door, and immediately recognized in the stranger a companion. "Hah! Gregory!—do we meet again—where are the boats?" Walking to one part of the room, Gregory in a whispering voice said something, but he spoke so low that Ovando could not overhear more than the words "they are waiting for you," and their short conference closed.

"I must leave you my good sir, said the soldier, as he sheathed his sword which he had drawn on hearing the tap at the window; and in company with the stranger he silently left the house and descended the hill towards the shore of the river.

Fastening the door and replenishing his lamp, Ovando returned to his room and again occupied himself in writing. Almyra had fallen into a gentle slumber, and awful stillness reigned around—the bird of night had ceased its lonely shriek, and the earth seemed locked in the arms of the god of sleep. Ovando pursued his labours of the pen until the family clock announced that the third hour of the morning had arrived. "It is time Mother Monomia was here," whispered he to himself, and at that instant the sound of voices struck upon his ear and a tapping was heard upon the window accompanied by mother Monomia's voice. He hastily arose and let her into the house, conducting her and the female companion who accompanied her, into the room.

On entering the room Almyra awoke, "You are come at last, good mother," faintly, said she.

"Yes, in time I hope," replied the nurse.

Ovando then left them together and hastened to make preparations for his short journey. Ere the star of day was to gild the horizon, he had promised

to meet the Marauder on the confines of the Cedar-swamp. To fail in a promise the fulfilment of which he had called on the moon and stars to witness, would be stamping his character with inconstancy. He therefore hurried his departure and equipped himself without further delay. A large lion-skin coat covered his trusty sword and pistols which were belted by his side; and leading forth his horse he stopped for a moment to inform Almyra that he should return again on that day—then giving her a parting kiss, mounted his horse and put him at full speed down the hill that led to the shore. Plunging into the rapid stream, the impetuosity of which was near sweeping both horse and rider to destruction—he however gained the opposite side of the river in safety, and striking the rowels of his spurs deep into the sides of the animal galloped him up the bank, and was soon on his way over the long Lefvingwell plains.

Aurora, the goddess of day had just begun to open the portals of light in the eastern horizon, and yet he had upwards of ten long weary miles to traverse ere he reached the destined spot. The morning air was chilly and piercing; his clothes which had trailed in the water of the river were cold and uncomfortable, still he pressed on with redoubled ardour, determining to be at the place appointed at the specified time. The hoofs of his spirited charger thundered over the frozen ground, and sounded through the thick copse wood which lined the sides of the road. Not a solitary being had as yet met his wandering gaze as he travelled on his way with rapidity.

At length he reached the high land which overlooked the city, on the west side of which lay the dark and dreary Cedar-swamp, which stretched itself like a black mass at a distance. A bright spot had just begun to tinge the blue clouds beyond the summits of Groton hill, when he turned down into the dark and gloomy gallows-lane; on both sides huge columns of rocks were piled in masses upon each other. The serpentine course of the road which wound among the ponderous ledges that lay scattered

around somewhat impeded his course : but his proud steed snuffing the cool bracing air of the morning, pranced lightly over the ground.

A few moments brought him into the darkest part of the lane, which was lined on each side by lofty oaks, whose thick spreading branches seemed almost to shut out the light of heaven. Suddenly his horse stopped—his ears were erected—and, backing as if fearful of proceeding, wheeled almost round ; Ovan-do turned him, and starting at full speed with the velocity of the mountain deer bounded over the stony path, while his utmost exertions were unavailing in checking the fiery movements of the frightened animal.

At a distance, in the middle of the road was a cause-way, in the centre of which, formerly, a small bridge had been thrown over to admit a rapid stream, which foaming crossed the road beneath it and roared through the forest. The lapse of time had decayed the bridge and left a deep chasm, which his horse with one bound leaped, and still pursued his course as if on the level plain.

Soon the tops of the forest trees of Cedar-swamp burst upon his sight, and checking with all his strength the fiery speed of his charger, turned into a cross lane that led to the borders of the dark swamp.—The prospect from this spot afforded a view of the ocean as far as the eye could reach. The sun was just peeping his red disk from its bosom, rising like a globe of fire from the waters.

Ovando reached the destined spot of rendezvous and looked anxiously around for the Marauder, who had sworn by all that was sacred to meet him on the confines of the swamp ; should he fail, his oaths of fidelity were broken, the consequences of which he could not divide, though he trembled lest it should involve him in a labyrinth of difficulties from which he could not easily extricate himself. The morning gun from a distant battery announced to him that the time had expired, when turning his horse to retrace his steps back, he saw a horseman at full speed amidst

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a cloud of dust coming over the plain. The fleet steed cut the air as he flew over the ground, and the next instant Venter was by his side; and sprung from his proud horse, which obedient to the commands of its master stopped, panting, covered with dust and foam.

"Pardon me the delay I have caused you, my Ovando," said the Marauder, "an unforeseen accident prevented me from meeting you at the appointed time. An assassin's arm has thrice aimed at my life, and even now the red stream fast issues from my bosom." He said and tearing open the folds of his mantle, displayed his breast gushing with the crimson stream, which stained in spreading gore the vestments that covered his manly form.

"Magnanimous friend!" exclaimed Ovando, shuddering at the sight of blood, "you have arrived in time,—thanks, that the bloodhounds have failed;" and delivering the packet of papers which conveyed away a part of his property into the hands of Venter.

The eyes of the Marauder brightened as he received from his deluded victim this pledge of faith and devotedness. He had him secure within his grasp, or what was better, that which would add to the company's treasure. Mounting their horses they slowly accompanied each other, retracing their steps towards the banks of the Thames. On reaching Reffingwell's plains, they parted to make the necessary arrangements for carrying their plans into execution. Ovando crossed the fields to the river, while the chief retraced his steps back to the city.

CHAPTER IV.

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Ovando crossed the river, and on reaching his sequestered habitation, Mother Monomia met him at the door. The melancholy expression of her countenance presaged some dreadful intelligence.—

"Speak," cried Ovando, as he contemplated her alarmed looks, "has any thing happened.—How is Almyra?" and he trembled lest his hopes should in a moment be blasted.

"Almyra is a mother," said Monomia, mournfully, "but I fear she will not survive the shock—there has been sad doings here since the morning dawned." "What!" exclaimed the adored husband, "tell me quick—torture me no longer—does she live,—and the infant?" "She lives," replied Monomia, "but the infant! alas, I know not,—a ruffian has stole from the arms of its mother the precious babe, soon after it was born."

"Ruthless barbarian!—daring robber!" exclaimed Ovando, "stole the infant!—who, and what was he, that durst enter the dwelling of innocence and tear from the bosom of Almyra, my child?" He raved like a madman. In fury he rushed from the house and springing upon his horse, had galloped at some distance ere the calls of Monomia caught his ear.—Returning back to the house he rushed into the room.—Almyra, with a sad but joyful scream received him in her arms. "Wretched Ovando!" she faintly articulated, "fly and rescue the child of my bosom from the robbers."

Like the tempest's blast he again rushed from the house and quicker than the wind mounted his jaded steed, and entered the forest on his left. In a voice of thunder he called on the daring villian who had rifled him of his treasure; and dashing on heedless of the interwoven underbrush, was soon entangled in a thick cluster of bushes that intercepted the path he had taken. Like a maniac in the last stage of delirium, he tore his hair with the fury of desperation. At length, exhausted with fruitless efforts to proceed in that direction, he turned his horse into another opening. A narrow winding path scarce wide enough for his horse, led him to the shore of the Poquetanoc,—plunging into the stream, in an instant he reached the opposite bank and ascended its steep sides unconscious of danger. The face of the country on this side of the river, though rocky and

uneven, presented no impenetrable forests to bar his speed, and he galloped on in pursuit of the robber.

On his leaving the hamlet in the morning, mother Monomia and her companion attended the unhappy Almyra in the struggle of nature, in which she gave birth to an infant daughter. The throes of anguish, and the convulsive shiverings of her weak and tender frame, alarmed the good woman Monomia, who despatched her companion to the neighboring village for a physician. The period had passed ere she returned to the hamlet with the medical assistant. Myra was born a few moments after her departure; and the new born infant had scarce received its first covering from Mother Monomia, when two men, masked, entered the room and tore the babe from her arms.

Horror struck, she surveyed the robbers for a moment ere she spoke, so completely surprised was she at the daring deed. At length, like a lioness deprived of her offspring, she flew upon them. "Daring ruffians!" exclaimed she, "return me the infant,—give me the child, thou human monster! Merciless barbarian! see its senseless mother! Oh, rob her not entirely of life."

Unheeding her cries and tears, they rushed from the house bearing away the lovely burthen. With prayers and intreaties, Monomia followed them imploring on her bended knees, the return of the infant; but, callous to the feelings of humanity, they entered the forest like the voracious wolf bearing from the flock of the shepherd the tender lamb, and soon disappeared among the trees, while Monomia returned to the hamlet overwhelmed with grief, to comfort the wretched mother.

Ovanço pursued his course over hill and dale, crossing thick swamps and deep morasses, until the summits of Lantern-Hill, rising like a huge column on the uneven country, presented itself before him. The meridian sun shone in splendour, shedding his bright beams on the towering cliffs, which sparkled

like a gilded mass covered with bright diamonds.* Their hues, like the bright rainbow which arches the heavens after a rain storm, caught his wandering gaze. He had reached the foot of the towering mountain; its steep rugged sides presented an impassable barrier to the lightning speed of his courser.

A large pool of water on one side at the bottom of the hill attracted his attention; the liquid element seemed gently agitated by the wind that whistled around the shaggy rocks on the north side of the mount, and moaned dismally in his ears like the suppressed cries of an infant. He listened for an instant; and turning his horse in the direction of the forest on the margin of the pond, spurred him towards the spot.

He had scarce entered the forest and proceeded a short distance, when the sound of a woodman's axe caught his ear, in a contrary direction. Bewildered by the contending passions which raged in his mind, and made desperate by the loss of his first born, he rapidly pursued in the direction from whence the sound proceeded. With eyes wild and haggard, glaring with fury and indignation, he suddenly came upon the peasant who was chopping fuel for his rustic habitation which stood on the borders of the woods.

Checking his speed a little, he accosted the honest woodman, and enquired in a hurried manner, whether he had seen a person bearing in his arms an infant: "I have, surely," replied the woodman, "two men left me but a moment since, with a child, and a tender babe it was,—they proceeded in that course" said he, pointing to the south.

Like an arrow shot from the bow of the keen-eyed native, Ovando darted in that direction. He soon reached the open country, and an extended plain burst upon his view. His eagle eye caught the distant forms of two men hurrying their course with rapid strides over the plain. Soon the fleetness of his horse brought him by their side. "Stop!" cried he, in a voice of rage, as he dismounted from his

*A species of flint stone, which resembles glass of various colour, adhere to some parts of the rocks on this hill.

steed, and with an iron grasp seized on one of the men. The wretch trembled in his hands and implored for mercy.

"Mercy !" said the incensed Ovando, "It dwells beyond the skies—where is the child which ye robbed from its defenceless mother ?—Deliver it to me ere I immolate you with a father's vengeance." Unhesitatingly they placed the babe in the arms of the transported Ovando, who, letting loose his grasp received it. With eyes still blazing with fury, he exclaimed "Avaunt, wretches ! nor blast my sight again." Disencumbered of their charge they hastily left him ; and striking into a thick cluster of trees on the left, disappeared from his sight.

Not the shipwrecked mariner when released from the horrors of the wreck in a starving condition, could receive the long wished for nourishment with more greediness, than Ovando received his infant babe.—Every feeling of the past, faded like a dream ; and mounting his jaded horse, which from the first dawning of the day to that time had been in constant use, almost at full speed over the ground, he slowly retraced his course towards the hamlet, where he had left Almyra overwhelmed with grief and consternation at the sudden loss of her first born—the infant Myra. The faint moanings of his infant induced him to move at a quicker rate, but the wearied beast, which fatigue had rendered obstinate, refused to move at a faster pace than a walk, notwithstanding the rowels of his spurs which pierced and lacerated his sides.

At length he reached the banks of the river, and descended its steep sides dashed through to the opposite bank. The lonely habitation looked desolate, as he approached it, and with fearful forebodings he alighted, and pushed open the door, entered the house bearing the child in his arms. A faint scream from Almyra announced to him that she recognized her babe. In a transport she hugged the infant to her bosom, while Mother Monomia, in breathless anxiety awaited the first burst of joy being over in the transported mother, to inquire of Ovando where he had rescued the child.

Smiles of delight again illumined the features of Almyra as she tenderly gazed on her husband, while he recounted to her and Mother Monomia the rescue of the infant, and joy once more spread her gladdenng influence around the sequestered hamlet, while Ovando in fond anticipation indulged himself in dreams of future happiness.

Night soon threw her dark mantle over the face of nature, and Ovando retired to seek refreshment from the fatigues of the day. The anxiety of his mind previous to delivering a part of his property into the hands of Vantor, and his anxious solicitude for Almyra, had drove sleep from his eye-lids and slumber from his thoughts. But his business was now accomplished, and throwing himself on the bed, was soon locked in the arms of sleep.

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CHAPTER V.

Ovando awoke not until the gentle taps of Monomia at his door, the next morning, aroused him from his leaden slumbers. Hastily rising, he was informed that a person below, waited for his appearance with some impatience.

Unused to such sudden calls, Ovando descended to meet the stranger, revolving in his mind the cause of so early a visit. On reaching the bottom of the stairs the towering figure of Vantor stood before him;—grasping his hand they retired for a few moments, when Vantor informed him that the time had now arrived for him to test the sincerity of his professions—The clarion of war now sounded throughout the land—the legions of the enemy were traversing the country, and with sacreligious hands invading the dwellings of innocence; polluting the sanctuaries of their fathers, and impiously defacing the monumental tombs of their remoter ancestors. Now was the time for them to act in secret; the depredations of the enemy would serve as a cloak under which they might fearlessly pursue their business.

The arch chief, in relating the numerous opportunities which were now presented before them, appeared completely absorbed in his anticipated projects; his eyes gleamed like a meteor, illuminating the darkness of his features with an awful appearance. Ovando gazed on the Marauder; the contending emotions of love and duty alternately took possession of his soul—Almyra was not in a situation to be abandoned; his infant daughter, too, called loudly for protection: once already had the lawless robber invaded his sanctuary of innocence and hospitality and rifled it with ruffian violence. But what could he do; he had pledged himself by the right hand of fellowship, and swore at the feet of the Marauder to serve him at the first call. Earth, sea and sky had witnessed their solemn oaths of friendship, and should he be the first to burst the bands that bound their hearts in the chains of mutual gratitude? No! the sacrifice must be made—pure and unsullied had always been the honour of Ovando's word. It had passed his lips, and it was law with him. It was a decree, and while his heart swelled, and beat high in the proud consciousness of fulfilling his word, he assented to the call, and the Marauder departed.

On the retiring of Vantor, Ovando was depressed in spirit at the suddenness of the call, for the fulfilment of his rash promise, which in a moment of infatuation had passed his lips, and now compelled him either to violate oaths, the solemnity of which imposed an obligation which called in question his honour, or made him unfeelingly abandon his wife and child.—He was about to embark in an expedition at which his heart revolted. Supicions had begun to haunt his imagination, for hitherto unmolested he had enjoyed the sweets of domestic life in the society of his Almyra; but now, forbidden to impart to her the secrets of his engagement, he must invent excuses for his absence. He had deposited nearly all his treasure into the hands of the Marauder. It was hidden in the subterranean vault, and was beyond his grasp.

Tortured with suspicions and anxiety he determined to evade a meeting ; and with forebodings dark and gloomy harrassing his mind, he entered his dwelling—but what a sight was presented to him ; his lovely infant lay smiling upon the bosom of its mother, while she, with fond looks was gazing at her tender offspring.

Such a picture at once determined him to stop his midnight meetings, and for a time abandon Vantor, fearless of the consequences. One circumstance appeared involved in mystery ;—who was the stranger who had visited him the evening previous, and what could mean those mysterious words which the stranger Gregory had uttered to his companion, that the boats were waiting for him.” Was he also a Marauder ?—Alas ! had he linked himself so strong in the chains of guilt, that he could not retract ? No, he resolved to await the result, whatever it might be. So sudden was the change in his mind.

Time flew swiftly on, and Ovando, after revolving in his mind for several days, the circumstances of the visit from the stranger, and the words which he had overheard, conjectured that a plan ripe for execution, was near at hand he therefore determined to visit the shore and watch.

For a number of evenings he secreted himself among the cavities of the stupendous rocks which lay scattered along the beach, and beguiled the tediousness of his watchful hours, by contemplating the starry firmament, and gazing upon the gentle undulations of the water, as in small surges it rolled along.

It was on one of those evenings when all nature seemed wrapped in profound repose, and naught was heard but the waves beating against the rocky-bound shore, that the distant sound of a trumpet caught his listening ear. One blast only struck on the stillness of the scene, and all again was hushed in silence. Ovando folded up his watch-cloak, and placing it under his head, stretched himself in a cavity between the bank of the shore, and a huge fragment of rock which had started from its bed above

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and was firmly fixed on the beach. He now listened in silence to await the result of the signal sound of the trumpet, which had struck upon his ear.—From the position in which he lay, he could discern the landing-place on the beach, and the black water extended at a distance beyond. Soon a barge with eight men approached the shore; the oars were muffled, and universal silence seemed to pervade the movements of the crew; presently they reached the beach, and hauled the boat upon the shore, fastening it to a rock near the bank. Instead of eight, which he had previously counted, he could now distinctly see nine, one of whom resembled in size the stranger who had visited the hamlet.—Leaving one of their number to guard the boat the rest clambered up the steep bank, cautious and silent, each armed with a sword and musket.

Ovando waited until they had disappeared from his sight, then silently arose, taking the secret winding path that led to the rear of his sequestered residence; hastened to the house. On reaching the hamlet and fastening the door, he extinguished the lamp and concealed himself in one corner of the room that he might not be seen from the window.—An hour of anxious suspense had elapsed, when he began to think they had, fortunately for him, taken another direction, when a whispering noise of voices was heard, and the latch repeatedly lifted with a pushing against the door. At length, after a few moments silence, a loud rapping announced the determination of those without to gain admittance.

Ovando was fearless for himself, but trembled for the safety of Almyra and his infant daughter; whatever their object might be, he determined to protect his wife and child from insult at the expense of his life; and as the knocking continued he arose and proceeded to the door, demanded who was there. "Friends!" was the reply, which sounded from several voices at once.

"Whom seek ye, at this late hour," continued Ovando, "there is no one in the dwelling but the family,

who have all retired to rest—Begone!—there is no admittance here to night.”

“Aye!—but there is admittance, unless your house is made of iron,” said a rough voice, “open the door, or force shall drive it from its hinges.”

“He who enters first, dies!” said Ovando.

“We will risk that,” said a voice which Ovando recognized as the stranger’s. “Open the door, my good sir, it is friends, and not foes we seek within your dwelling.”

“I tell you,” said Ovando, “you have neither friends nor foes in my house;—and this door opens not but by force, until the morning’s dawn—admittance then is free to all.”

Enraged at not gaining a ready entrance, with horrid oaths one of the gang fired his musket at the door, the ball of which with some splinters from the wood work, whizzed past the head of Ovando. The report of the musket awakened Almyra, who trembling, arose and rushed into the room where Ovando stood guarding the door. “Return to your room, Almyra,” said he, “a band of lawless ruffians has beset the house and are determined to enter by force. Go back and protect your infant while I remain to defend you.”

A thundering rattling against the door accompanied by the discharge of a number of muskets, soon drove it shattered, from its hinges.—Ovando knowing their numbers, would have uselessly thrown away his life in defending the entrance, and accordingly made no resistance as they rushed into the room breathing vengeance upon him. “Seize him, comrades, and bear him to the shore,” said the commander in a tone of authority.

Lightning seemed to flash from the eyes of Ovando, as he placed himself against the door of the room which contained Almyra, and drew his broad sword from its steely sheath. “If you bear my body to yonder shore, it shall be a corpse. In this sanctuary of innocence reposes my wife and child, (pointing to the door of Almyra’s room) and at the threshold of which Ovando must fall, ere daring ruffians bear him from its entrance.”

A consultation was held among the gang for a few moments, when the leader of the party addressed him !—"Are you aware rash man, that in contending with us you seek destruction? Can you think that in thus braving our wills, you will escape from our hands? No !—either dead or alive, you accompany us to the shore,—most willingly would we spare you the pains of separation, but imperious necessity compels us to deliver you into the hands that wish to receive you as a friend and companion. We act not under our own orders but under those of one, whose will is law;—Do you know this signet?" presenting him with an emerald.

Ovando took the token of remembrance in silence from the leader of the band, and placing it on his finger, in a hollow voice rendered sepulchral by the recollection of his situation, answered the chief :—"I will accompany you, but not to night—at the dawning of the day I will start to meet your chief. My word, like the will of your leader, is law. The owner of this token knows the honour of Ovando—you have fulfilled your duty, and on the rocky-bound shore at the entrance of the harbour he will find me as the star of day peeps over the distant hills." "Be it so," replied the leader of the party; "but should you fail no power on earth will save you from the wrath of Ventor," they then quit the house and proceeded to the shore, leaving Ovando to fulfil his promise.

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CHAPTER VI.

The Marauder party had left the house for some hours, when Ovando aroused himself from the melancholy reflections which imperceptibly stole on his mind. "I have been duped into a belief that the man with whom I associated was alone," thought he, "but I will confront him." He now thought he could recollect in the countenances of two of the

party, the identical persons from whom he rescued his infant daughter. "Yes!" said he, "the enemy have indeed invaded the sanctuary of innocence and rifled domestic happiness of its sweets." With such thoughts as these, he entered the room where his Almyra lay, trembling with fear and agitation, weeping over her sleeping infant. It was a sight that aroused the dormant energies of his soul, while he gazed on her in speechless agony.

"Almyra!" said he, "I must leave you for a few days—but no power on earth shall keep me longer.—Altogether 'tis as it were parting soul from body." "Go then, cruel Ovando," said Almyra—"I submit to the tortures of separation;" and turning her weeping face upon the pillow, sobbed out an adieu.

With feelings bordering on madness, he prepared his horse, and soon left his unhappy wife and tender infant. Borne by the current of his feelings, he spurred his fleet steed over the uneven country with rapidity. A thousand stars twinkled in the heavens as he sped his way. The goddess Aurora, had just opened the gates of day, as the distant murmurings of the waves struck upon his ear in hoarse sounds. The rising sun like a ball of fire had just ascended from behind the summits of the eastern hills, when he dismounted from his horse at the entrance of the subterranean passage, and in a moment afterwards Vantor stood before him.

"Traitor!" exclaimed he, "is it thus you fulfil your sacred engagements?" "Yes," replied Ovando, firmly. A party at this instant was seen approaching the spot.—"Fear not," said Vantor, "they are friends."

"Friends or foes—they are alike to me," replied Ovando, coolly.

The chief bit his lips. The party came up, and Edwin coming forward informed him that a quarrel had taken place between two of their gang, in the division of some goods which had been found on the island. "Bring them to me!" exclaimed he, in a commanding voice. Standing amidst the party his

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lofty figure looked like the cedar of Libanon towering among the shrubbery of the forest—his frown seemed to terrify in all, but Ovando, the glance which his appearance attracted. A lion-skin watch-cloak hung loosely over his broad shoulders like Hercules with the skin of the king of beasts enwrapping him, so stood the Marauder chief.

Armed with a ponderous broad-sword suspended from his shoulders, the steely sheath of which reached the ground, and rattled as he moved, like the chains of a condemned criminal. A pair of large horseman's pistols were stuck in his girdle, and the hilt of a small dagger was seen projecting from the vestments that covered his bosom.

A few words soon stilled the dispute, and the party all retired to the building on the bank, leaving Ovando and Vantor on the shore. A silence of some moments ensued ere either spoke. At length, Ovando enquired why he had thus been kept in ignorance of the acquisition to their party.

"I feared your abandoning me," replied the chief—"your failure in not meeting me on my first call, induced me to send for you; the token has, it seems, accomplished what words in vain could persuade. Our party are brave and intrepid, and you alone are free from the labours of roving through the country. Your presence is not necessary at all times—we wish you only to dispose of what we accumulate, and a golden harvest awaits us all at the end of our labours." Ovando dispelled the storm of resentment from his countenance, and they retired to the house where the party had previously entered, and were taking their morning repast. He was received with a smile from the ruffian gang, who, faithfully devoted to their chief, understood by a glance, the double meaning of all the actions of their leader.—At length Ovando received his instructions from the chief of the gang, and at an early hour departed for the city.

Involved in profound secrecy the gang continued their depredations under cover of the night. The islands afforded a safe retreat in the daytime, where,

embosomed among the rocks on the southern shore, lay the entrance into their secret hiding place.—The lone building was only a temporary deposit, unknown to Ovando, who supposed his treasure safe in the arched room of the subterranean vault. Several times had Ovando visited the island, but his suspicions were at rest, and he pursued his business with the Marauder in secret; his absence from home had ceased to create a pang of regret, only at the moment of leaving his wife and daughter.

On one stormy night, as Ovando was about leaving the island to return to his peaceful dwelling.—The cup had circulated freely, and noise and mirth abounded throughout the party, when some words arose between Alascon and Talbot, two of the gang; the fumes of the wine had inspired them with high feelings. It was in vain Ovando tried by the power of his eloquence to quell the rash quarrel. Heedless they closed in dreadful fight, furiously distorting their countenances as they struggled like wild tigers to tear each other from their fast holds, and dash one to the earth. They continued straining until the dark crimson stream gushed from their ears and nostrils, and covered them in one gore of blood.

“Cease,” cried the chief, who entered at this instant; “spill not your blood in such useless feuds,—the earth spurns the red stream which flows from ignoble fight.”

Silently they bit their lips and retired towards the boat with Ovando, vengeance still glistened in their eyes. The submission which they had yielded to their leader was momentary. They again grappled in fight;—their daggers’ hilts projected from their bosoms, and each looked at his deadly weapon; in an instant, like meteors they flashed before each others eyes. One arm of each encircled their broad waists, and with the other extended held the glittering blades ready to sheath them in their bodies, when the leader again stood before them—he had heard the tumult, and hastened to the spot—lightning seemed to flash from his eyes and beam around his head—his hand rested on the hilt of the bright steel

which hung by his side, and his looks resembled the awful angel of destruction. With a withering glance he stopped their mad career, and they dropped the weapons of death, from their powerless hands. In silence he contemplated them for an instant. "And do you court death so much?" said he, "'tis the beasts of prey that immolate themselves—and I leave you to your own destruction:—but beware! the survivor dies; and that too by this hand." And beckoning to Ovando, they withdrew at a short distance to await the issue of the combat.

Scarce had the leader turned his frowning countenance from them, ere they commenced the conflict the third time. God of battles! who can describe with what animosity and deadly vengeance they fought. Precipitating themselves within each others arms, they hugged with an iron gripe until they fell, and the shore re-echoed to the sound as they rattled on the stoney surface. Coiling and bounding with uncontrolled fury, exhausted nature seemed just sinking on their feeble exertions, when a bullet winged its flight, whizzing through the air. "I yield," cried Alascon, slowly rising, "'tis useless strife;"—a ball had entered his body, and fainting he fell lifeless on the shore. The dark malignity of Talbot's eye lit his countenance with a secret joy as he lay panting with exertion by his side. Alascon's slight wound cooled his courage, and reviving from his fainting fit, they both arose sobered from exertion. The timely interference of the leader now put a stop to their hostile motives, and peace was once more restored between them.

Ovando crossed the sound and reached the shore, and pursued his course toward the dwelling of his Almyra.

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CHAPTER VII.

The conduct of Ovando became so much involved in mystery that Almyra ceased to make enquiries

respecting his business ; and as her uncle Mr. C. of New-London, frequently returned with him, often spending a day or two with them in their sequestered habitation, she thought all was well. The infant Myra was becoming more dear to her every day, when an event unexpected and unlooked for threw her upon a bed of sickness, which nearly deprived her of life.

The beauty of a fine moon-light evening had tempted her to listen to the repeated solicitations of Ovando to visit the shore of the Thames, and accompanied by Mother Monomia they descended the hill to the river. The distant hills appeared shadowed with clouds, and the pale moon-beams calmly reflected on the surface of the water. The stillness of the scene was uninterrupted save by the solitary sounds of the whippoorwill, singing its constant and melancholy notes by the river's side. They seated themselves on a point of rocks that extended out for some distance from the shore, affording a convenient spot for the fisherman in his sporting moments, and likewise a landing place for the boats that ascended the Poquetanock. Almyra seemed in a playful humour, and incautiously advanced to the extreme edge of the rocks. She stood calmly viewing the sport as they broke upon the glassy surface of the water. The tide was fast flowing in, which soon separated her from the main ledge, which at low water was left dry.

Her exposed situation was perceived by Ovando, at whose request she attempted to spring on shore. In the act she slipped her foothold, and was precipitated into the current which eddied round the point of rocks. A shriek from Mother Monomia was involuntarily uttered as she saw her lady sinking in the stream. In an instant the affrighted Ovando plunged in after her, and with a sturdy arm bore her insensible to the shore.

The delicate state of Almyra's health at this time, added to the fright of so sudden an accident, threw her into an alarming fever. Mother Monomia and Ovando incessantly watched with her during the

crisis of her disease, which fortunately turned to a favourable issue.

But months elapsed ere she entirely recovered ; and the rose of health had no sooner began to bloom upon her cheek, than Ovando commenced his mysterious conduct by frequent absence. Not unfrequently whole weeks would elapse ere he returned to his dwelling.

It was at this period that the United States threw off the yoke of the British king, and declared to an astonished world, a nation free and independant.

Years rolled away, and the frequent absence of Ovando had become habitual to Almyra, though it worried and perplexed her to such a degree that it gradually undermined her health.

But she devoured her grief in silence, and sought comfort in the interesting prattle of Myra. It was her delight to instil into her infant mind the important duty she owed to the Author of her being.—Although Ovando like a fond father doated on his only child, still neither the interesting conversation and alluring charms of his beloved wife, nor the affection he felt for his lovely daughter, could draw him from the path of guilt in which he was wandering.

Myra grew more beautiful as she advanced in age : like the rose-bud just bursting into bloom, she bid fair to rival in loveliness all others in that vicinity. She had arrived at the age of fifteen ;—the colour of her skin resembled the white lilly faintly tinged with the bright crimson glow of health ; while her pale blue eyes, like the violet's tints adorning a bed of flowers, added beauty to her finely modelled features. Her high and exquisitely fair polished forehead rose above, over which in rich profusion the silken ringlets of her chesnut-coloured hair lay scattered. Shaped in Beauty's mould, her light and airy form moved like an azure cloud in stately majesty. To look on her faultless figure, a glance was sufficient to rivit all attention ; like an elegant statue from the hands of an experienced artist, she looked the picture of some celestial being descended from the ethereal regions to astonish the earth with her transcendant beauty.

But alas! It was in vain that Almyra attempted to conceal the grief that preyed upon her constitution; worn down with silent sorrow, she was fast sinking to the tomb. The hectic crimson of a dire consumption would for a moment flush on her pale and wan cheeks, and then like the rays of the setting sun fade away. Mother Monomia was her constant attendant, and assisted the gentle Myra in bestowing upon her dying parent those little offices of friendship which alleviate the painfulness of a sick bed.

It was on a cold and stormy evening in December, when Ovando returned from one of his excursions after an unusual long absence. The Poquetanoc was bound in the icy chains of winter, and the snow-drifts were rearing their white tops along the banks of the river like grey clouds piled round the horizon. He approached his dwelling; not a track appeared upon the surface of the snow, which lay like a white sheet on the earth in front of his habitation. The faint twinkling of a light was seen beaming from the window; but all was silent as the hour of death—naught was heard but the tremulous branches of the forest trees occasionally rattling their frozen twigs in the passing breeze.

Stepping up to the door he gave two or three gentle raps, when a voice he instantly recognized to be Myra's, enquired who wanted admittance. "Your father," replied Ovando, as he entered the room clasping his daughter to his cold and snowy bosom.

"How is Almyra?" whispered he, and trembled with emotion as he beheld in the countenance of Myra, the picture of her mother, when in days long passed away, the rose of health bloomed on her cheek unsullied by the cankerworm of time, or consumption's ashy hue. "Oh, my father!" said Myra, "life yet lingers in her feeble frame—Cruel, but beloved parent!—how could you forsake so long, your Almyra! Come, my dear father, and cheer the dying mother of Myra with thy long wished and often prayed-for presence."

"Yes, my Myra," said he, "come, let us hasten to the suffering angel whom I have too long neglected,"

and the swelling tear which glistened in his eyes wet her cheeks as he pressed her to his heart.

Ovando silently entered the room. Almyra was in a gentle sleep,—her pale face, white as the driven snow which then mantled the face of nature, seemed like the polished ivory. Her sunken eyes and hollow cheeks evinced the decay which in a few weeks had taken place. As he stood gazing upon the victim of his neglect, a sigh which seemed to come from the inmost recesses of the heart escaped her lips, and she opened her eyes. The lustre which once beamed in all the radiance of beauty had faded—their brightness were dimmed by the ravages of grief and disease. “Myra,” faintly articulated she, as she cast her eyes towards her husband. The light shone full on his face, and she immediately recognized him. Opening her arms, she uttered the name of Ovando, and the emotions of her soul seemed to inspire her with new strength as she threw them around his neck.

“Almyra !—suffering angel !” exclaimed he, “Can’st thou forgive your Ovando !—Say, lovely companion of my bosom, wilt thou pardon your wretched husband ?”

A momentary gleam of fire lit her eyes for an instant: “Forgive thee—pardon thee !” said she, “Yes ! bless thee, my husband !” and fainting from the exertions of rising, she sunk back insensible upon the bed. Life seemed to have fled her clayey tenement; a cold chill struck to the heart of Ovando, as he thought the vital spark was extinguished, and rising from his bending posture tottered to a chair.

Myra flew to the couch of her mother, but Monomia had her in her arms, and was chafing her cold temples.

“Oh God !” exclaimed Ovando, forcibly striking his forehead, “is there no hope !” then rushing furiously to an adjoining room, threw himself on the floor, and in a paroxism of grief, vented in a flood of tears the overflowings of his heart.

At length, by the exertions of Monomia and Myra, she was restored to life : and looking wildly around,

called for Ovando. He heard—and rising in a transport, at the well known sound of her voice, was instantly by her side.—She fixed her glazed eyes upon him, and putting forth her hand seized his tenderly, pressing it to her heart, and in a tremulous voice, articulated “Farewell Ovando !” She closed her eyes—a gentle heaving of her bosom seemed for an instant to agitate her frame, and her hand relaxed its hold. The messenger had come ! Death had sealed her eyes in eternal sleep,—the gentle Almyra had ceased to live—she was no more.

Ovando leaned over her lifeless remains, confounded at the sudden shock of witnessing the departure of all his earthly hopes. Not a tear bedewed his manly cheek—not a muscle of his face moved.—Like the picture of Woe leaning on the monumental marble, he stood still bending over the corpse of his beloved Almyra, apparently unconscious of any thing around. At length, rising, he exclaimed, “Gone for ever !—Peace be to thy shade, thou injured fair one !”



CHAPTER VIII.

How short-lived are all human calculations. Ovando had resolved and re-resolved, but the last sad duties were scarcely paid to the remains of the unfortunate Almyra, when he left the house, promising to return in a few days. But alas ! days and months expired and Ovando returned not.

Secluded in the retired habitation, Myra spent the winter, with no other companions save Mother Monomia, and a collection of music and books. Though grief had somewhat faded the rose which bloomed on her cheek, yet she enjoyed in acts of devotion that consolation which true virtue, pure and unsullied, affords to the pious mind. Her morning and evening prayers were offered up to the

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Eternal for her absent parent, who though alienated from her by so frequent absence, still she loved with filial affection.

At length winter shook off her icy fetters, and the gentle season of spring commenced its pleasing career, cheering all nature with its enlivening influence. The budding flowers of the forest, with the beauties of the fine spring mornings frequently induced Myra to extend her walks to some distance in the grove.

One morning, while seated on the trunk of a fallen tree, which the woodman had levelled in his labours, she began to ruminate upon her helpless and almost orphan situation, when the sudden sound of a musket fired at a short distance startled her from her reverie, and looking round to see from whence it proceeded, a pigeon fluttering in the agonies of death dropped at her feet, and directly the huntsman clad in soldiers' dress appeared before her. She had stooped to pick up the wounded bird, and was rising with the feathered victim in her hand when her eye caught the figure of the huntsman who stood gazing intently upon her.—

The crimson blush mantled her fair cheeks as she stammeringly answered to his salutation on the beauty of the morning. She let fall the bleeding pigeon from her hand, and courteseying, turned to proceed toward the hamlet.—“Pardon me, lovely lady,” said the stranger, “I have unintentionally disturbed you in your morning ramble,—will you permit me to accompany you out of the forest?” As he spoke, the lustre of his bright eyes beamed in smiles of tenderness upon her.

Agitated and confounded at encountering a stranger so near the residence which she had inhabited from her infancy, she replied, scarcely conscious of what she was uttering, that the distance to her residence was short—modestly refusing his offered services, and then moving with a light and airy step, was soon hidden from his view behind the large trunks of the forest trees. He stood gazing at her sylph-like form, which, like an azure cloud, had for a mo-

ment flitted before him, and then vanished. "She is lovely as an angel," said he, as he slowly bent his course toward the opening of the forest, in the same direction; "and the habitation which shelters her cannot be far distant."

On emerging from the thick cluster of trees at the entrance of the woods, the rustic mansion of Ovando burst upon his sight. "This must be the place," exclaimed he, as he hurried toward the dwelling.

Myra was earnestly talking to Mother Monomia, as the stranger came up to the door.—His looks were wild and frantic. "Is not this the residence of Ovando—?" said he, with a low bow.

"It was once," replied Monomia, "but alas, he has now abandoned it entirely. The mysterious man scarcely enters the doors of his own dwelling since the death of his wife."

Myra had retired at the sight of the stranger, who continued talking to Monomia.

"That must be his daughter," continued he, looking anxiously after her as she disappeared from the door. "Yes," replied Monomia, "that is Myra, his lovely daughter."

"And does not the beauty and innocence of such a child often allure him to his home," said the huntsman.

"Alas!—No, my dear sir, his feelings are cold and insensate towards the tender orphan, whom he has made so by abandoning her, and his happy home."

"I must bid you adieu," cried the stranger, as he threw his gun over his shoulder, and with a quick step descended the hill towards the shore.

"Who can this stranger be," thought Myra, as she overheard his conversation with Monomia;—and entering the room as he left the door, she caught a glimpse at him descending the hill. "Mother! he has gone—Do you know him?" eagerly asked she.

"No?" replied Monomia, "he left me without leaving his name. I fear, my Myra, that all is not well with Ovando." Myra shuddered as Monomia

pronounced the prophetic words respecting her father, but said nothing more of the stranger.

There was residing in the city of New-London, a connexion of Myra's mother, who had several times been at the hamlet, and since her death had repeatedly solicited her in urgent terms to take up her residence in his family. She had once asked permission of her father to reside with her uncle for a short time but had been refused.

A few days after the stranger had so unexpectedly surprised her, she received a letter from her father, containing the agreeable orders to remove to the city, stating that Mr. C. her uncle, would call and convey her to his habitation. In his letter, he informed her, that although necessity compelled him to absent himself from home, yet he had now prepared a place of refuge in the family of her relation, which would be her future home, and further informed her that he had joined the army,—but what army, whether British or American, she could not tell. He promised however to see her before her departure.

A week had nearly elapsed, when one morning she discovered a person coming up the hill from the shore, whom she instantly recognized as the stranger who had been hunting in the forest. He was tall, handsome, and well-made, and being now divested of his military costume, appeared to good advantage. He introduced himself to Myra, as Cornelius C—, a nephew of her lamented mother and spoke in candid and honorary terms of her father, and informed her that he came at the earnest request of her uncle to solicit her to accept his house as her home during the absence of her father. He requested her to make preparations for her intended removal, when at the end of two weeks, he would accompany her to her uncle's house. Towards evening he bid her adieu and departed.

Mother Monomia had been absent during the day, and did not return until Cornelius had left the house; and Myra forbore to mention any thing about her intended removal, until the time of her departure drew near.

Two nights previous to her intended removal she retired to rest at an early hour, with her spirits sad and depressed. It was one of those nights in spring, when sudden storms arise and rage furiously for a while, and then all nature seems hushed to repose. She threw herself upon the bed, and lay meditating on her situation. She could scarcely realize that she was so soon to take her residence among strangers.

The image of Cornelius flitted before her eyes.—How different was his appearance from when she first saw him accoutred like a hunter of the forest, when he alarmed her by the report of his deadly fowling-piece. The look of tenderness which he then cast upon her still lingered in her recollection. He was the son of her departed mother's brother, who had removed from the romantic banks of the Willemantic, to the Green Mountains of Vermont, where, amidst the uncultivated wilds of that section of the country Cornelius first saw the light.

The native mountains of his youth had inured him to storms of cold rain, and snow, and on the breaking out of the war of the revolution, like a true son of the forest, whose dauntless soul spurned danger, he left his paternal mansion and removed to the shores of the Atlantic, that he might repel the rude invaders of his country's rights. He was the only heir to his father's vast possessions, and was ushered into the society of the world with high expectations. As a standard-bearer of a new raised corps, he had signalized himself in the field of battle on the plains of Saratoga, and was one of the gallant heroes who subdued the savage tribes of the Six Nations in the western part of the state of New-York; but a severe wound which he received in a conflict with the Indians, compelled him for a time to abandon his military career, during which, he had taken up his residence at New-London. A hunting excursion had accidentally thrown him in the way of the dwelling of Ovando, of whom he had often heard his uncle speak.

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The above brief history of Cornelius had been communicated to her by him, and she was revolving in her mind the singular circumstances of her first meeting him. At length she closed her eyes in sleep just as a storm was beginning to rage without.

She slept calmly for some time, while the thunder rolled through the vaulted arch of heaven, and shook the earth with its tremendous roar; tempests howled through the sky, and almost impenetrable darkness overspread the face of nature. The descending torrents of rain and hail beat with violence against the shackled windows with a pattering noise, which aroused Myra from her slumber. She heard the fierce roar of the wind which howled in dismal sounds around the insulated dwelling. Where is my father! thought she, as she lay trembling with fear, at the awfulness of the storm. Two weeks had already elapsed and no tidings of him had reached her.

Only one day more and she was to bid adieu to the beloved scenes of her infant days. The rising orb which was to guild the morrow's morn would see her on her journey to the city of New-London; and as she thought on her loved home which she was about to abandon perhaps forever, the tears of regret flowed fast. At length the morning, cloudy and gloomy, began to break in the eastern horizon, and she arose to prepare for her journey.

Fearful as was her conjectures respecting her father, she lulled her suspicions to sleep, and sought to abstract her thoughts from anticipating harm to him. His silence towards her might be owing to the unsettled state of the country, for she knew not where the army he had joined was stationed. Mother Monomia frequently had knowledge of the movements of the armies, but her information extended not to individuals—she knew no names of those slain in battle.

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CHAPTER IX.

The evening previous to the departure of Myra, Mother Monomia came into the room. The tender solicitude which had always been manifested by this good woman toward her, created the most painful feelings in her breast at the thought of leaving her ; and the necessity that compelled her to abandon friends so dear, was on this occasion rendered doubly severe, when she called to mind that Mother Monomia knew nothing of her intended journey.

During the evening Monomia scarcely spoke a word, but occasionally, the big tear trembling in her eye proclaimed the inward workings of her mind.—In vain Myra sought by frequent sallies of wit to enliven the scene as if unconcerned respecting her feelings ; but fruitless were her endeavours to cheer the melancholy gloom which pervaded the features of the good woman. She would frequently cast her anxious eyes upon Myra, which appeared dim with tears, and then an uninterrupted silence of considerable length ensued. At length Myra caught the same spirit of pensive melancholy. She proceeded to her piano, attempting by the charms of music to banish from her thoughts the unpleasantness of her situation.

Mother Monomia listened to the melodious tones of Myra's voice ; the image of the departed mother of Myra, flitted before her old eyes, and unable to withstand the recollections of the past she burst into a flood of tears. Her convulsive sobbings interrupted Myra. She ceased her sweet notes, and with tenderness seated herself by her side. The old woman embracing her in her arms exclaimed, "And must you leave us—must we be forever separated."

"Leave you !—who says that 'Myra is going to leave you ?' " said Myra with a seeming surprise.—"Alas ! my child," replied Monomia, "I know more than yourself. But, tender dove of the hamlet, I am not permitted to utter what my fond heart would

fain pass. I must now leave you, but ere we separate, let me be assured that I shall hear from you before my grey hairs shall be laid in the grave."

"You will hear from me and see me too;" replied Myra, "I shall shortly return. Oh, Monomia, it grieves me to leave the loved spot of my nativity."

"Perhaps it is for the best, my child said the old woman, "cease to murmur at the wayward changes of this inconstant life." She then took her leave of Myra, bidding her an affectionate farewell.

Every thing was in preparation for Myra to commence her journey the next morning, and she retired to bed but not to sleep. Crowds of melancholy reflections rushed on her mind, and drove sleep from her eyes. It was a night that seemed almost endless, she fain would have refreshed her wearied frame with sleep, but all her endeavours proved fruitless.

Morning at length dawned, and she arose almost worn out by the exertions of the preceding day, and the fatigue of a sleepless night.—The orient orb of day had shed his broad beams upon the surrounding hills, when a servant of the nephew of Mr. C. came up to the house and delivered her a letter, the purport of which was that the bearer would accompany her to the city. Every thing was in readiness for her departure, yet she still lingered, as if reluctant to quit a residence where, in her infant days she had been fondled and caressed by a kind and affectionate mother. She cast her tear-dimmed eyes towards the green hillock, beneath which reposed the ashes of her mother. She hastened to the spot, and silently kneeled by the monumental stone, on which was inscribed the name and age of Almyra, and with uplifted eyes poured out her soul invoking the blessing of the orphans' God.

At length she arose, and taking a last survey of the surrounding scenery she accompanied the servant to the shore, where a boat was in readiness to waft her across the river to the carriage. She reached the opposite side and was seated in the carriage which was to convey her to the city.

It was a beautiful day, and the face of nature looked smiling and gay as they passed along. Slowly they rolled over the extended Leffingwell-plains, passing the Mohegan town, inhabited by a tribe of Indians, the descendents of old Uncas. The interesting appearance of these untutored children of nature, induced Myra to stop a short time in the vicinity, amusing herself in visiting among the wigwams, and distributing some little presents she had accidentally brought with her. In the afternoon she again continued her journey. A few hours brought her in sight of the city. The dark and dreary Cedar-swamp lay on her right, while the prospect before as far as the eye could reach, presented a scene at once beautiful and grand.

The setting sun just tinged the towering steeples with a golden hue, and the tattoo drum sounded its martial notes from Fort Griswold, echoed its thundering sounds over the hills. The sun descending, had left a bright and illuminated spot in the horizon, and the stars had just began to twinkle in the heavens, as the carriage drove up to the large mansion-house of Mr. C. The old building seemed like some deserted edifice, which the lapse of time had mouldered into decay. The old-fashioned house stood on an elevated spot of ground, with a flight of steps ascending from the street. Two towering pines frowned on each side of the huge building, whose weather-beaten walls looked black and dismal as twilight faded away, and the darkness increased.

She was assisted from the carriage by Cornelius, the nephew of her uncle, whose volatile and lively air, somewhat cheered her in the contemplation of her future residence. On entering the hall she was ushered into the sitting-room, where a cheerful fire blazed on the hearth, illuminating the large, high walls which in some places were much shattered and in a ruined condition. Old Ann, the black woman, who had for years been a resident in the mansion, came to take her baggage to the room prepared for her reception.

Fatigued with travelling, Myra retired early to

her chamber, where, after giving vent to her feelings in a flood of tears, she resigned herself into the arms of the Eternal; and throwing her wearied frame on the bed was soon lost in the embraces of sleep.

The beams of Sol were just peeping above the eastern hills, and shone full on the windows of the mansion, emitting its bright rays into her chamber and shining on its papered walls, when she awoke, refreshed by the balmy restorer of nature, sleep. Rising, she attired herself, and taking a seat by the window, contemplated on the romantic scenery which was presented to her view.

The distant Sky-rocket Hill, covered with sheep and lambs, gamboling and frisking in fantastic pranks upon its summit. The neck of land which formed a cove in the river Thames, was covered with its green mantle, interspersed with ponderous rocks, which speckled its surface like the islands in the sea. The tide was fast flowing into the cove, that extended to the foot of the rising eminence, on which stood the mansion-house that was to be her future residence.

She amused herself by watching the gradual rise of the waters, and surveying the tumbling torrent that fell from an over-shot mill directly fronting the house. Another stream also rushed from the pond above, and dashing with resistless impetuosity among the rocks, ended in a gentle rivulet which wound its way to the shore, and mingled with the waters of the cove.—At the same time a thick swamp, dark and gloomy burst upon her sight, through which the stream was conveyed that whirled the ponderous wheels of the mill. The feathered inhabitants were darting from the muddy shores of the cove to the swamp, carrying in their beaks materials to repair their habitations, and also food for their young.—The tall pines on either side of the house were hid from her view, but the innumerable black-birds that darted from that direction, proclaimed their towering tops a safe habitation from the lawless school-boys, who, prowling about in search for eggs, dare not ascend their giddy heights to rob their nests.

Separated from all other buildings the ruined mansion appeared fast falling to decay. Myra arose from her seat and descending the grand stair-case to the hall below, passed through a suit of rooms to the back part of the building and found herself in the back yard. The spacious and elegant domains attached to this ancient mansion, delighted her for a moment. A large field, with a gentle ascent, reared its green sides for a considerable distance, while the dew-distilled waters glistened on its grassy surface, reflected by the beams of the rising sun. The chirping songsters were chaunting forth their morning lays. How blest are they, thought she, the troubles and vicissitudes of life do not enter their feathered bosoms.—On airy wings they soar aloft—the boundless expanse of air belongs to them to roam at large; while I, a poor unfortunate orphan, am thrown upon this tempestuous sea of life, almost friendless and helpless, with no kind mother to guide my wary steps. Suddenly her thoughts were arrested, as she sauntered through the walks of the garden, by the sight of Cornelius, who was seated in a summer-house at the farther end of the garden, around the pillars and roof of which, twined the honey-suckle and jessamine flowers, just opening their budding beauties.—He was busily employed in writing, and the spreading branches of a thick rose bush shut her from his sight, but she could distinctly see him. Fearful however, of being discovered, she turned into another part of the garden.

Myra had as yet seen but a part of the family of her uncle, but on again entering the house, she met in the hall, several of the domestics who informed her that her uncle and cousin were waiting her presence in the breakfast parlour. On entering the room, she was received with every mark of kindness and respect; her uncle welcomed her to the city, and presented her to the lovely Lucy, his adopted daughter.

Lucy was an orphan, who had been consigned, when an infant, to the protection of Mr. C. under whose fostering care she had been educated. She

was about the same age of Myra, though not equal in beauty. Her amiable disposition had endeared her to all. She was indeed worthy the attention of Mr. C. and he adopted her as his own.

Myra appeared to her like the wood-nymph of the forest, adorned in artless simplicity, and the loveliest of nature's works; as by instinct, a mutual feeling pervaded their bosoms, which soon ripened into a sisterly affection for each other. On the arrival of Myra the evening previous, Lucy was absent along with her foster-father, who unexpectedly did not return till late in the evening, when Myra had retired to rest.

The company of a youthful female companion, delighted Myra. She anticipated many hours of social enjoyment with Lucy and Cornelius, and began to look forward to days of happiness.

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CHAPTER X.

Myra was completely domesticated in her uncle's family, but there was one source of unhappiness which pained her feeling heart.—Her father was a proscribed being—an outcast from his country, and had leagued himself with its most bitter enemies.—Her uncle had informed her of his connexion with the Marauder party, whose daring depredations had so long kept in alarm the inhabitants of the surrounding country, until at length they aroused the vigilance of the civil authority. By a bold stroke they had seized a part of the gang at the lone building, among whom, was Ovando. But Vantor, the leader, and five of his associates, had effected their escape.

Through the negligence of the guard, Ovando had also effected his escape from the hands of justice, and entered into the service of the British, then in possession of New-York.

The gentle Myra went over the misguided steps of her father, and in accents of tenderness besought

her uncle to recall him to the path of virtue. He shook his head. Once indeed he had tried to stop him in his mad career. For his sake, he had concealed his knowledge of the existence of the Marauder party. But deaf to the voice of reason, he was too far gone to be reclaimed. Ovando possessed honor, but it only consisted in the fulfilment of his promises. His word in all cases might be relied on. It was this that had caused his ruin, in pledging his word to the Marauder chief, in the first instance.

The prophetic words of mother Monomia, now came across the recollection of Myra, and it was realized "that all was not well with Ovando." For it was on that evening that the party was seized at the lone building, on the shore of the sound.—The indignation of the captors was at such a pitch, that they, with fury, razed the building to its foundation, and exposed the subterranean passage from it to the shore; and so exasperated was the mob against the lawless gang, that it was with the utmost difficulty that the police officers prevented their sacrificing the offenders.

Fortunately for Ovando, he was well known to some of the most respectable inhabitants, who shocked at the turpitude of his crime, were active in rescuing him from the hands of an infuriated mob, that signal justice might be done to such an arch villain, who for years had, under the veil of an honest calling, dealt with them in plundered goods.

Their over-anxiousness to secure him, however, relaxed the vigilance of those, whose duty it was to keep him, and he watched for a favorable opportunity, and, at length, effected his escape.

Notwithstanding Myra's unhappiness respecting her father, the kind and endearing attention of her uncle, together with that of Cornelius and Lucy, soothed the melancholy feelings of her heart, and she enjoyed, in uninterrupted tranquillity, the society of a large circle of friends.

The romantic scenery on the shores of the Thames river, at the north eastern boundary of the city, for-

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cibly impressed her with the loved scenes of her youth. In company with Lucy and Cornelius, she delighted to wander among the shady trees of Winthrop's Woods and Soldier Lot, which bordered the shore. The eagle and the hawk would ever and anon, start from their towering habitations, sailing on airy wings over the waters of the majestic river, and perch upon the lofty tops of the oaks and pines on the opposite shore; while large flocks of wild sea-fowl resting upon the bosom of the water suddenly arose, flying up the river, until the projecting points of land hid them from view. While Cornelius, with his gun and faithful dog, Fidela, (of the true terrier breed,) were hunting, Lucy and Myra would stroll along the shore. The fierce barking of Fidela often announced to them that a victim was seized, as the loud report of Cornelius' musket sounded through the forest.

Amidst such scenes as these, Myra had passed two or three months, and nothing was heard from Ovando. The taking of the Marauder party had ceased to become a topic of conversation, and her uncle was preparing to go on a journey in a few weeks, to visit the father of Cornelius, who resided in Vermont. Cornelius likewise, was about starting on some urgent business for Boston.

The war still raged in the southern states, and Myra anxiously sought for all the information she could gain respecting the armies, in the hopes of hearing something from her father. Some vague and unconnected reports had reached her that he was taken as a spy, and executed on Long-Island. Another, that he was promoted by the British commander, and had signalized himself in several engagements. But whether any of these accounts were correct or not it was uncertain to determine. At times Myra was tortured with fearful forebodings that the former was true; but she endeavoured to banish from her mind what seemed possible and not improbable, yet was founded on nothing which could be relied on.

The month of August set in, and Myra embraced an invitation from her uncle, of paying a short visit

to mother Monomia, in the neighborhood of the loved home of her infant days. Her uncle having purchased a new carriage for his intended journey, was desirous of taking his niece and adopted daughter out on a ride, proposed the visit.

They found Monomia enjoying her usual good health. Not a fond mother, could more rejoice to see the child of her bosom than she was, again to behold her loved Myra; and though short was their stay at the good woman's house, necessity compelled them to bid her adieu. On leaving her, Myra lingered behind her uncle and Lucy, and with tears bemoaned to this, her second mother, her fears and anxiety respecting her father. Monomia sympathized with the lovely girl, while she folded her to her bosom, until reluctant Myra gave her a parting embrace, and proceeded to the waiting carriage; and though she was borne swiftly towards the city, yet her thoughts still dwelt on her native home and the good woman she had just left.

Among the numerous visitors who frequented the domestics of her uncle, and like drones, were hanging around the kitchen, there was one named Lille, who used to tell the fortunes of the credulous servants. She always pretended to visit Ann, the coloured domestic, who had resided with the family from a child, and with whom she had formed an acquaintance at an early period. Old Lille resided at the lower part of the city. Her habitation, as well as the power of necromancy, which she pretended to be gifted with, were known among the young people, particularly among the giddy companions of Lucy, and consequently Myra soon imbibed that spirit of curiosity, peculiar to her sex, of ascertaining what futurity would bring forth respecting herself and friends.

Myra had only to intimate to old Ann, that she wished to see her companion, Lille; and an afternoon was appointed when the rest of the family were to be absent on a sailing party, to have her come to her chamber. Though Myra was free from the faint and superstitious ignorance to which so many

of her sex are prone; yet the hag-like looks of Lille had impressed her with feelings of curiosity to have her tell her fortune. Her looks were forbidding in the extreme, and she always appeared wrapped in a veil of mystery, which it was impossible to penetrate.

Ann promised that Lille should come, and the innocent bosom of Myra palpitated with eager expectation for the interview, though she mentioned it to no one, fearing that Cornelius would think her credulous. Old Lille was of the true African descent,—many a wanton thief had been detected by her through the agency of this gift of second sight; but whether she discovered the perpetrators after the manner of the witches of old, in riding through the air on a broom-stick, or whether she, like the invisible rambler, possessed the ring of transmigration, and visited the secret recesses of the inhabitants, was best known to herself. But certain it is, that Lille told many a truth that astonished the inhabitants.

Myra had been brought up far from the busy scenes of the world, and during her whole life, had almost been embosomed in the forest. Almyra, her mother, was possessed of all the accomplishments which usually adorn the female, and was the only instructress to her daughter. From her, Myra had received an education, which not only befitted her for the humble station in which she had moved, but qualified her for those of an higher sphere. Although the soft tints of melancholy would sometimes overspread her lovely countenance, saddening and depressing her spirits, yet there were times when the dormant energies of her soul were aroused, and she threw off the fetters of her sex, and rose on a level with the lords of creation. For with a mind capable of tints, as various as the seven-fold light, she could endure, and rise superior to the frowns of fickle fortune, and stem the current of adversity, while the softer sensibilities of her nature seemed locked within the inmost recesses of her heart.

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CHAPTER XI.

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The evening at length came, in which old Ann had promised Myra that Lille should pay her the visit.—The family had been absent the whole day, and had not returned when she retired to her room.—She threw open the window. It was a beautiful clear sky that appeared above, and not a breath of air seemed to disturb the tranquillity of the scene around. What a delightful evening, thought she, to be upon the water, and she stood listening to the soft tones of two or three German flutes, that sounded from the sky-rocket hill; the music of whose notes floating in the still air around, soothed the melancholy of her feelings, which for the whole day had saddened and depressed her spirits, she knew not why.

A voice now aroused her from her meditations. It was Ann, who had accompanied old Lille to her chamber door. She admitted her with a trembling, which seemed to seize her, as it were, instantly, and motioning her to a seat, threw herself on a chair by the window. With emotions of fear Myra surveyed the form of the sybil. "I am come," lady, screamed the hag, as she stalked across the room and helped herself to a seat. She appeared like the witch of Endor, when raising from the bosom of the tomb, the prophet Samuel, and her penetrating eye gazed on the form of the orphan, as she laid her long bony fingers upon the back of Myra's chair, and began to hum to herself, in a wild strain, the following lines:

Listen now to fate, fair lady
Death comes o'er the sea ;
The forest is dark and shady,
Come, love !—come, love, and see.
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And her palsied head shook like an asper leaf, when agitated by the fierce winds of the tempest. Continuing in the same wild strain, she repeated, in a louder tone—

Fair one, I come with mystic art
To soothe your sorrows—mend your heart ;
Every day and every hour,
Hail to Necromancy's power.

Then drawing her seat close to Myra, she took from her bosom a pack of cards and a Bible.

"Mercy," cried Myra, "pollute not that sacred volume by those cards. Is there no other way of divining the secrets of futurity?"

"None," cried the sybil, as she folded her handkerchief on them, and deposited the bundle in a large pocket which was suspended on the outside of her garments, reaching nearly to the floor. "Hear me, lady,—call not on me again, for the winds have ceased to blow,—a calm has come over the ocean; but the tempest hovers in the sky. You will hear it, lady!—I come not again, but on the whirlwind's blast;" and stalking out of the room, she shut the door with violence. The noise sounded thro' the hollow rooms of the ancient mansion while dismal sounds seemed to echo from the broken walls. Like the fleeting meteor, she had vanished ere Myra had an opportunity of appeasing the anger which sparkled in her eyes.

"I shall hear the tempest blast which is hovering over me, yes, and feel it too," repeated Myra, to herself, and looking out of the window, an awful black cloud seemed at that moment rising in the north. The wind appeared gradually to increase, and soon nought was heard but its tremendous blast which whistled around the mansion.

Darkness now increased, and the rain began to fall; the large drops beat against the windows, the frames of which rattled in the decayed casements.—Peals of thunder roared through the vaulted arch of heaven, and shook the old building to its foundation. At this instant the door of her room opened, and Cornelius entered. "This is a sudden tempest, Myra," said he, "the lightning has struck in the

millswamp," and advancing toward her, he continued "But what means those alarmed looks—surely the daughter of Ovando does not distrust the mercy of the Almighty."

Frightened, pale and trembling, the lovely maiden lifted up her eyes all bedewed with tears, and fixing them full on the face of Cornelius, exclaimed, "Now comes the threatened storm which is to burst over us.—Oh! would that I had submitted to the incantations of the sybil."

"Explain yourself, Myra," said Cornelius, "what fears alarm you—there is nothing in the storm that is so terrible or uncommon. Calm yourself, my girl. The violence of the wind has abated, and even now a beautiful rainbow has arched the eastern sky,—See you not its splendour? I came to solicit your attendance below." Upon which, Myra, rising, he accompanied her down stairs and supported her trembling frame to a seat at the tea-table.

Sick at heart with the contending emotions which agitated her bosom, she could not touch any thing to eat, but sat absorbed in the dismal reflections of her own mind, seemingly unconscious whether she was asleep or awake. In vain Cornelius essayed to attract her attention, and by solicitation induced her to take some refreshment;—her bosom throbbed with wild commotion, and pleading sudden indisposition, she retired to her room.

The dark clouds of the tempest had disappeared, and the war of the elements, which an hour before seemed to represent the last dread day, when the anger of an incensed Jehovah would overwhelm with

"The wreck of matter and the crush of worlds," the grand fabrick of the universe—was now calm and serene, and a beautiful clear sky sparkled its ten thousand stars with brilliant splendour.

Myra was at a loss to conjecture what old Lillie meant by her parting words, and she intensely thought on the possibility of any human being divining the secrets of futurity. At length she banished from her

recollection all gloomy thoughts, and retired to bed. The next day Cornelius was to leave them for a few days on a visit to Boston. Mr. C. and Lucy were also ready to proceed to the Green Mountains of Vermont, and Myra was to be left alone as sole house-keeper, with the management and control of all the domestic concerns.

Morning arrived, and she arose tranquilized by the quiet rest which she had received. Cornelius and his attendant were busily preparing the horse for the carriage, and she sought the room of her companion, Lucy, to assist her in preparations for immediate departure. At length they all assembled in the parlour of the mansion, where her uncle fondly imprinting upon her cheeks his parting kiss, hastened to the carriage. The lovely Lucy approached, and locked in each other's arms, for some time they seemed loth to part, until Cornelius gently disengaged them and conducted his adopted cousin to the door, handed her into the carriage.

Myra stood gazing at the rolling wheels of the coach, as they turned on the axle-tree, until mounting the hill amidst a cloud of dust, they were soon hid from her view, and Cornelius again entered the room to take his leave of her. A few pearly drops stood in her eye, caused by the parting with her companion, Lucy. He had never seen her look so lovely before,—her long chesnut coloured hair in curling ringlets was confined only by a single pin, and in rich profusion hung carelessly over her snowy white neck; the azure blue of her eyes, though dimmed with tears, seemed to emit the rays of love and hope. He approached her, with love sparkling in his large dark eyes and the flush of hope mantling his cheeks with its crimson glow. Being about to bid her an adieu for the first time, he was unable to command his feelings, and knelt by her side. The ardent language of his soul was pourtrayed in his countenance as he gazed wishfully upon her tremblingly pronouncing his farewell. She turned her head, faintly articulating "leave me, Cornelius!"

"Adieu, Myra !" said he. "Oh ! parting is sweet sorrow !—Farewell,—May guardian angels protect you until we meet again." A faint farewell was all she could utter, and the next instant she saw him in the carriage. As he ascended the hill, he cast a lingering look behind, and saw the distant wave of her handkerchief. Suddenly the turn of the road hid her from his view, and heaving a deep sigh, he pursued his course.

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CHAPTER XII.

Three or four days had elapsed after the departure of our travellers, and Myra arose early in the morning, setting down to her drawing materials—She felt unusually sad in her mind, and in a short time threw them aside, and descended to the lower part of the mansion. It was a fine September morning, and the beauty of the surrounding objects induced her to wander around the extended domains of the mansion. In deep meditation she strayed through the avenues and walks, while her thoughts turned to the situation of her father. Where was he, and to what an orphan situation had he exposed her, his only daughter. She felt some secret foreboding in her mind that something was going to happen, but could not tell why she thought so.

Finally, the day wore away, and the heat which had been almost suffocating, was now somewhat cooled on the departing rays of the sun. A gentle breeze agitated the trees of the garden, and the leafy bushes tremblingly rustled in the soft air. She had taken to her drawing again, and was busily employed in sketching a drawing of the surrounding objects. Twilight was fast fading away, and the moon-beams had begun to shed its lurid rays on the old decaying walls of her room, when she arose, and throwing

open the window took a seat, reclining mournfully with a fixed gaze upon the clear water of the cove, which in gentle billows sparkled as the mantle of night overspread them, while ever and anon, the chegot sporting in the liquid element, broke upon its glassy surface.

A fire light was seen on the borders of the distant shore, which appeared like a beacon, flaring its blazing light for an instant, then dimly twinkling in the distance, then brightening again, spread its light over the water, lighting the eel-fisherman in his employment ; who, standing as it were, amidst smoke and flame, appeared like a fiend, armed in the midst of the fires of Pluto's dreary realm. Darting his barbed spear to the muddy bottom, would draw his victim from their beds of rest and deposit them in his little vessel.

The Aurora Borealis lit the northern sky with its red hues, while in the west, blazed a comet, which in splendour spread forth its fiery tail, as the harbinger of that destruction which fire and sword leaves in their train. The appearance of the clouds, represented contending armies, and sudden flashes of heat-lightning issued from them and illuminated occasionally, the sparkled canopy which arch the heavens.

The appearance of this grand, sublime and terrific display in the vaulted expanse above created in her, feelings of wonder, awe and admiration. While viewing these objects in the heavens, a carriage came rolling up to the grand entrance in front of the mansion, and she recognized Cornelius. Arising hastily, she left the room and descended to meet him in the hall with joy sparkling in her azure-coloured eye and smiling on her cherry lips.

"Returned again, my Myra," said Cornelius, as he clasped her slender form to his bosom, and imprinted on her forehead the kiss of joy.

"Welcome back, Cornelius," replied she, disengaging herself from his arms, and with a light and airy step preceded him to the parlour. "I have been gazing on the singular looks of the heavens for some

time," continued she, "and the sublimity of the scene had inspired me with a supernatural warning of some distressing event involving my friends, and with pleasure I hail your return.—Have you accomplished the object of your journey?"

"Alas, ! no," answered Cornelius "I reached Boston only in time to discern the distant sails of the vessel which bore my friend on a cruise to seek the enemies of his country, and was compelled to return with the sad and gloomy feelings that the fate of war might forever separate us."

Cornelius had fasted for the most part of the day, and Myra ordered the aged domestic, Ann, to prepare a repast for him, while she laid the cloth for the table. With fond attention she performed the duties of waiting upon him and then repaired to her piano. Cornelius soon after seated himself beside her. The plaintive airs which heretofore had so much occupied her attention, were no longer brought forth; lively duets and solas, accompanied by the full melody of her voice were echoed from the instrument.

The period of retiring to rest had arrived, yet, still they lingered over the loved instrument, and with melodious notes beguiled the fleeting moments. At length Myra arose, and taking a light retired to her room. The heavens were overcast with dark clouds which passed over in rapid succession, obscuring the rays of the moon, which at intervals burst forth in splendour, illuminating the darkness around. She closed the shutters of the window and threw herself on the bed, little thinking the dawn of the next day would arouse her with the appalling cry of war!

Cornelius too, was fatigued, but still loath to partake of the sweets of sleep, sat musing on the sudden reverses of fortune, that alternately elevate and depress the spirits of mortals. His journey to Boston had inspired him with sad and gloomy thoughts, and something seemed to whisper that Edwin and he should meet no more. All at once a drowsiness came over him and his eyes closed in sleep. The

midnight hour sounding from the hollow strokes of the house-clock, roused him from his slumber. At the third hour of the morning he was to depart on an expedition that would admit of no delay. It was now too late to indulge himself in longer sleep, and he summoned his attendant to prepare for the short journey, while he arranged the papers intrusted to his charge, and secured them in a leather case which buckled upon the saddle of his horse.

Fearing lest Myra should be anxious at his sudden departure without some explanation, he hastily seized a pen and left a note on the table, informing her of the necessity of his leaving town, and affectionately commending her to the watchful care of the Allwise Being who protects the innocent. Arming himself with sword and pistols he hastily left the house, accompanied by his servant, and was soon traversing the lofty hills towards Connecticut river.

The morning star was just appearing in the horizon, when Myra was awakened from her sleep by the thunder of cannon, which made the glass rattle in the casements of the old shattered windows, and presently a number of the domestics rushed into the room with frightened looks, declaring that a hostile foe was landing at the mouth of the harbour, and that already the glittering arms of the regulars, were seen in martial array coming over the town-hill toward the city. Those signals of alarm were sounded from the summits of Groton heights, and the dauntless citizens were hastily repairing to man its batteries.

Myra, although terror-struck, calmly contemplated the frightened looks of the servants as they crowded around her demanding what was to be done. "Fly to the distant farm-houses in the country," cried she, "while I remain to guard the property in the house. They dare not molest an innocent, defenceless female.—But where is Cornelius?"

"He started early this morning in haste," said a domestic "bidding me hand you this letter."

Myra tremblingly opened the letter; he had indeed departed, and she was left alone amidst alarm

of war which now sounded throughout the city. Women and children were seen flocking through the streets bearing in their hands the most valuable part of their property to a place of safety, and nought was heard but screeches and lamentations. Husbands were forced to leave their wives and children, and take up arms to repel the rude invaders, who dealt out death and destruction on all those who dared to oppose them.

Alone and friendless, Myra knew not where to fly. Although she had advised the servants to seek safety in flight, yet she had not strength enough to accompany them.

A body of the enemy's troops had entered the lower part of the city, spreading ruin and desolation around them. Already had the flames begun to ascend the heavens, and the thick clouds of smoke mounted up, curling to the skies. The fire-brands of destruction were now lit by the incendiary fiends and with a demoniac pleasure they saw the crackling flames envelope the only shelters of the innocent, defenceless widows and orphans.

The legions of that arch traitor Benedict Arnold; armed with thundering cannon and infuriated troops, thirsting for blood and plunder, had driven from the thickly inhabited part of the city all who opposed their progress. So sudden and unexpected was their arrival, that the military, although summoned from their slumbers at the battle's cry, had scarce time to seize their arms ere the sanguinary foe were at their dwellings.

Myra had secured all the valuable papers in the mansion which belonged to her uncle, and as the din of arms sounded at a distance, the shrieks of the wounded and dying was borne to her ears in the passing breeze. Every domestic had sought for that safety which she had recommended to them, and with tears bid her adieu. At length she resolved to secret herself in a dark closet, the entrance to which was a secret door, and as the danger thickened she fled to her hiding place.

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CHAPTER XIII.

The red glare of flame which ascended to the heavens, spread far and wide. The cannon from Groton heights roared in quick succession; the flashes of which were dimly seen through the black clouds that arose from the smouldering habitations, illuminating its summits, which appeared like a tremendous volcano vomiting out fire and smoke. The lawless band of soldiers, drunk with blood and slaughter, were prowling through the deserted streets, eager for pillage and plunder. At length they approached the steps that led to the house of Mr. C. With fury depicted in their countenances, and destruction in their eyes, they entered the house, and with blasphemous oaths rushed through the hall, and ascended the grand stair-way, to the second floor. One of the party in his hurry accidentally caught the lock of his musket in the folds of his watch cloak, and sprung the deadly piece. The loud report echoed through the deserted mansion, and struck upon the ears of the terrified Myra. "God of Mercy, save me!" ejaculated the orphan,— "must I then submit to the rage of these merciless foes!" and springing from her secret recess, crossed the room and descended the back stair-way. The lower room was filled with the regulars, who were searching for plunder, uttering the most horrid imprecations.

Opening a small square window which lighted the stairs, she sprung into the garden. A soldier, sauntering through the avenue, saw her alight, and with a shout rushed towards her. Myra darted from him like the forked lightning; and springing over the high enclosure, sped her way across the extended fields—like a light cloud in a tempest, borne by the impetuous hurricane, she glided over its grassy surface.

The ruffian soldier pursued until he came up to the fence which enclosed the spacious garden of the mansion, over which his eluded victim had, like the mountain deer, lightly bounded. He beheld her move with the rapidity of the wind—she seemed borne in Boreas' blast, and distance was fast separating her from him.

"Halt!" cried the soldier, in a voice of thunder—but she heeded him not and continued her flight. He paused a moment, "I will stop you then," said he, as he levelled his trusty fusee.—His finger was pressing the trigger, and the leaden messenger was just on the point of winging its way to the disappearing Myra, when one of his comrades rushed towards him.

"Hold!—Dastard villian!" cried he, "would you slay a defenceless female, flying from such a blood-hound as you are?—Fire not! or by the Tomb of St. George, you die likewise."

"What!" exclaimed the assassin, "do you not see the enemy,—'tis practice I aim at.—By St. Albans, I'll have a shot!"

"Fire at your peril!" replied the veteran as he lifted his fire-lock to level at him.—"Hah!—tremble then monster!"

By this time Myra had scaled the walls which bounded the field, and rapidly pursued her course toward a rising eminence which was possessed by some citizens that had halted in their retreat from the burning city.

"It must be so," said the ruffian soldier, as he re-shouldered his piece, and swore another should not escape him.

"So it should be!" replied his comrade. "I came just in time to save an innocent victim from destruction. Disgrace on you, Talbot! what harm can she do?"

"Umph!" rejoined Talbot, "you would spare those who would raise more rebels,—but I serve my king, and all I find, whether male or female, that come within the range of my trusty barrel, by St. Albans! never shall live to tell a tale of truth!"

"Villain!—cease your boasting!" replied the honest-hearted veteran. "Such a ferocious blood-hound as you, pretend to plead the service of your king for such unheard of atrocities!—the earth groans beneath you!—But you are young in years yet, though I perceive old in cold blooded crimes. Hark ye—dastard! did mercy ever sound in your ears, and you granted it when it was in your power?"

Talbot, with fury flashing in his eyes, exclaimed, "leave me, old grey head! I war not with words!"

"Nor with arms neither," said the old veteran, as he turned with indignation from the lawless youth.

Myra reached the distant eminence, and was borne in a passing carriage to a neighbouring town; but the war-cry still sounded through the city, and extended to the borders of the forest. The ruffian soldiers had dispersed in small parties and were searching every avenue and corner in order to satiate their blood thirsty disposition. With shouts of defiance they traversed the fields and woods around, till at length, wearied with fatigue they returned to the burning city of which the greater part was reduced to ashes. The surrounding air was filled with fragments of blazing cinders, borne on the north wind, they appeared like flaring meteors sailing through fields of liquid ether.

The heavy artillery continued to thunder from the lofty batteries of fort Griswold, resounding through the extended forest, and echoed its tremendous roar over the distant hills. The star-striped banner of Columbia still waved in triumph enveloped in thick clouds of smoke and flame, which burst from the cannon's mouth ascending to the skies.—The glittering arms of the Britons in martial array with fixed bayonets, were ranged in front of the grand entrance, while dimly through the murky columns of smoke could be perceived the legions of the infuriated traitor, as they mounted the hill in solid columns.

In every quarter cool-blooded murder bared her arm, and indiscriminate slaughter ensued. Horrid shouts rent the air, drowning the groans of the dying :

citizens, who had spilt their blood in the cause of freedom.

A day of such horror seemed to Myra as terrible as the last grand drama of the destruction of the universe. She had witnessed the scenes of carnage which were committed by the minions of Arnold, when they rushed on the defenceless inhabitants, apparently unconscious that human beings were their victims. She had beheld the daring courage of her friends, who, almost unarmed, with undaunted bravery, withstand these merciless monsters, fearless in defending their wives and children, determined to conquer or die. Her heart had sickened while she beheld her brave countrymen rush on to inevitable destruction in opposing these ruthless invaders, like the hardened wretch with a bosom steeled to all remorse, madly precipitating himself on the thick bosses of Jehovah's buckler. These scenes had aroused the dormant energies of her mind, and inspired her heart with feelings superior to her sex.

All at once a momentary silence seemed to reign, and unable to withstand the torturing suspense, she left the cottage in which she had taken shelter, and ascended an eminence not far distant, to view the city in flames. This last sight formed her resolution, and she rashly determined to hazard the danger and enter the town.

Impelled by an almost supernatural courage, and impressed with the belief that she might afford succour to some wounded father or son, whom the enemy had left weltering in blood, she pursued her way through the dreary cedar-swamp with heedless steps.

She had reached the northern boundary of the swamp when the lifeless body of one of the enemy lay in her path. A sudden thought now rushed into her mind, and she determined to execute it— she immediately divested the dead soldier of his military coat, and hastened to the first house that lay in her way. On reaching the building she found its inhabitants had fled, and the burning firebrands scattered about the floor, told her the enemy had been there also.

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After rummaging the house for some time in search for a lower dress to correspond with the military coat, she at length found one; and accoutering herself in the regimentals of the dead Briton, she boldly sallied forth like a youthful son of Mars to the field of battle.

With a quick step she descended the hill which led into the city—the smoke that arose from the smouldering ruins had filled the air, the suffocating fumes of which compelled her frequently to stop and gasp for breath while pursuing her course through the deserted streets. Suddenly turning a corner, a party of regulars, in promiscuous order, were hurrying with a savage fury reading the air with shouts and uttering language the most diabolical. One, who appeared to be their leader, an old grey-headed warrior, was in vain endeavouring to quell their noisy vociferations, when they encountered her.

She cast her trembling eyes upon the ruffian gang, and with affrighted looks was turning back to avoid them, when she found she was discovered.

“Hallo, Comrade!—Fall in the rear!” vociferated one of the party. Being discovered, she was now compelled from necessity to obey the command, and pulling her cap over her face she joined the party, determining at a convenient opportunity to give them the slip.

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CHAPTER XIV.

Placed in a situation from which there was no relief, Myra was now compelled to act the part of a soldier in reality.—The coat of the dead Briton which she had on was stained with blood. It was soon discovered by one of her companions, who instantly tapped her on the shoulder, exclaiming “What! wounded, man!—that is the fate of a sol-

dier. Never mind it, my lad !—Cheer up my brave fellow, we shall yet have warm work in storming the garrison.

I hope so, thought she to herself, as she answered him. "It is a mere scratch that I received in a skirmish with the enemy." Fearful of being detected in her disguise, she endeavoured to say as little as possible, while the soldier proceeded :

"This is rare sport for us,—bobby and beauty is our reward !—We will show the rebels what the minions of the traitor can do. There is not a female in the place—No ! but the light of one female countenance has blessed the eyes of Talbot as yet—and she escaped me. I would have brought her back, had not the merciful mockery of yon grey-head who commands us interfered."

Myra cast her eyes for a moment, on the soldier, and withdrawing them instantly, uttered a low prayer to the Eternal, for her miraculous preservation ; for she recognized him to be the same who attempted to seize her when leaping from the window of the mansion-house.

They were now met by another party strolling through the streets, ransacking and firing every house that remained. At this instant an officer, who appeared of high rank, came up, mounted on horse-back, giving orders to halt ;—and directed the party to the side of the river, in order to cross and join the main body, who were in the act of storming the battery on Groton heights. His orders were quickly obeyed,—they immediately wheeled and marched to the place of crossing.

It was in vain that Myra sought by stratagem, while marching, to detach herself from the party ; for the blood thirsty, talkative Talbot, haunted her like a spectre,—constantly keeping by her side, decanting upon the feats he had performed, and repeatedly asking her opinion of the signal services he had rendered his king, in first setting fire to the buildings which then blazed around them.

At length they reached the crossing place, and all embarked for the opposite shore. The situation

of Myra was indeed painful to her feelings, and courage began to decrease as they approached the landing place: for she was now compelled to add to the number of the hostile foe, who were eager to surround the garrison. Numbers from every quarter were marching towards it, having finished the desolation and ruin which spread far and wide.

With all the pomp of war, and in battle array, the legions of Arnold were surrounding the garrison, and the party reached the front just as a surrender of the fort was demanded by the haughty traitor.— With proud feelings of satisfaction she heard the indignant answer returned. It bellowed in rattling thunder from the cannon's mouth, and with Spartan courage they shrunk not from the formidable force which surrounded them.

Placed in the ranks of the hostile Britons, Myra was borne along, while rank after rank fell beneath the deadly fire of her brave countrymen. At length, like the burning lava from Etna's mount, rushing with resistless force, superior numbers burst the gates with shouts that rent the air, and echoed over the distant hills. With the rushing crowd she was hurried within the walls of the garrison, and immediately her wandering eye caught a glimpse of the brave Ledyard, the American commander. She beheld him with majestic steps, and thundering voice, rally his gallant few, and his nodding plumes fluttered in the gentle breeze, as he moved with dignity and speed from one quarter to another. At one moment she discovered the flash of his eyes, which seemed to blaze in vengeance, and irradiate the broad features of his face, while blood and carnage, the most awful ensued.

The Americans were soon hemmed in by a large body of the enemy, which rushed towards them.— Myra turned her dim eyes from the horrid scene that was there presented to her view; heaps of the wounded and slain, lay weltering in a sea of blood, groaning, and uttering the most dismal cries. Sickened at the sight, she lifted her heart in prayer to Heaven for protection.

By superior force, the garrison was soon overpowered; but the work of death continued, and with proud submission the American warrior stopped forward to stop the effusion of blood by presenting his sword to the haughty Briton who commanded the relentless forces. "Quarters, for my brave associates in arms," said he, with a manly voice, as he let fall the bloody point of his blade. But he spoke to a demon.

"Rebel!—thus receive it," uttered the merciless barbarian, with a horrid smile, as he heathed the crimson steel in his bosom. As Myra shrieked, and vengeance for an instant, with the fire of a warrior. Alas! she saw a number of Britons and Americans fall by the same deadly weapon, when a shout burst with deafening loudness upon her ear.—Turning her eyes, she saw the standard that supported the banner of her country, shot from its foundation, and an intrepid son of Columbia, grapple the shattered staff, mounting it again in the air, hugging it close to his hardy breast.

"Shoot him down!" exclaimed a wretch who stood next to Myra.

In the enthusiasm of her soul, she exclaimed "Spare such heroism!" and caught hold of the man.

Her attempts were fruitless,—an hundred pieces were levelled at their victim, and he fell, pierced with balls; yet extended on the earth, with only one remaining limb, he still supported his country's flag, until tottering in his grasp, it fell; and while his eyes closed to the light of day, the heroic warrior, continued pressing it to his bleeding bosom. Such dauntless heroism aroused her every feeling—but she sickened at the sight of such cold-blooded murder.

Her companions, wearied with slaughter, were leaning upon their arms, and she stood gazing around, till her bursting eye-balls pained her, when a stately looking officer passed near her, dripping with blood. The expression of his face seemed familiar, as he hastily disappeared behind the guard-house. "It cannot be him," muttered she to herself, as she stooped to remove the body of the unfortunate Ledyard from

the heap of slain that covered it. She had turned over three or four bleeding carcasses, and was endeavouring to raise the body, when the same officer stepped up to the spot where she was performing this act of humanity.

"Generous Soldier!" said he to her, "you have anticipated me in bestowing a respect upon that corpse." At that voice she lifted her eyes, when Ovando, her father, stood before her. Instantly letting fall the body, she exclaimed "My Father!" and fell senseless at his feet.

Ovando gazed at the form of the youthful soldier, which lay prostrate before him. "My Father!" muttered he to himself, and raising her inanimate body in his arms, placed it in an upright position.—In the act of raising the soldier as he thought, the cap which covered her head fell to the ground, and he recognized his daughter Myra.

Had a clap of thunder, accompanied with the blue lightning's streak, shot its red glare athwart his eyes, it could not have startled him more. Powerless for an instant, he contemplated her pale and lifeless figure. Her high forehead, white as the alabaster monument, was bathed in a cold sweat, and her elegant formed countenance, which bore the image of his departed Almyra, could not be mistaken.

"Myra!—my daughter!" cried he, "is it thus I find thee?" and beckoning to a soldier who stood at a short distance gazing on the scene, ordered him to fetch some water. At the instant a deep drawn sigh escaped her, and she opened her eyes, gazing wildly around. Ovando raised her in his arms, and bore her without the walls of the garrison to a small grove of trees, at the back of the fort; where, laying his almost insensible burthen on the green sward, supported her aching head upon his bosom.

"Fragile reed!" exclaimed he, kissing her pale forehead, "what could induce you to brave the horrors of this dreadful day? Was there no protecting hand to rescue you from beholding the sight of your father—a traitor to his country—a criminal—an outcast!" Bewildered with the painful recollection,

tions of past scenes, which now rushed on his memory, he pressed her to his bosom.

Myra soon recovered from the shock which she had experienced on recognizing her father among the troops of Arnold, when she informed him of the absence of her uncle, and the friendless situation to which she was exposed on that ever to be remembered morning, also, related the circumstances which brought her to her present situation.

"I will be back in one moment," said her father, as he darted off in great haste. He had scarcely disappeared from her sight, when he returned, mounted on an elegant horse.—"Come, my daughter," said he, "come from this horrid sight." He lifted her in his arms, and galloped off from the garrison.

Every dwelling they passed was deserted of its inhabitants for some distance around. At length they reached an insulated building, where he alighted from his horse, and conducted her into the house.—An old lady was the only inhabitant at home, who was frightened at the sight of two soldiers in British uniform. But she was soon undeceived with respect to Myra, and Ovando left her in charge of the matron.

Myra had left a part of her female attire on the opposite side of the river, where she disguised herself in the dead soldier's dress, and the aged matron, on learning the circumstances of her case, immediately supplied her with a coarse, but decent homespun frock, which belonged to her grand-daughter—and now again dressed in the habiliments of her sex, she became the same tender female.

She had witnessed the pomp and the horrors of war, and the scenes of blood and slaughter still flitted before her eyes. But worn out with fatigue, her pale wan looks, evinced to the eyes of the old woman, that sleep, nature's balmy restorer, was necessary for her feeble frame; and as Ovando had left her in charge, after some solicitations, she persuaded the trembling Myra to retire and seek some refreshment.

CHAPTER XV.

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Ovando, after leaving Myra in a place of safety, returned to the garrison. He arrived there just as the troops of Arnold were embarking on board of their transports, to return to New-York. He was under the necessity of attending to their embarkation, intending to return to her as soon as possible, and remove with her to the Canadas.

The last boat was leaving the shore, and the sails of some of the vessels were loosened to the breeze, when a few straggling soldiers arrived on the beach, and were clamorous to be put on board, swearing they would go in the boat at all hazards. Already twenty or thirty had crowded into the little barge, when Ovando jumped on board ordering the boat to shove off, and the remainder to wait the arrival of some other one from the ships. About ten of these ruffians who had entered the boat, with horrid imprecations were boasting of their feats, and he ordered them to silence. His heart sickened at the repeated sounds of boasting which struck upon his ears; for he himself, had aided in the work of death against his countrymen.

At length the barge which contained them, had almost reached the flag-ship of the commander in chief, and the sturdy oarsmen were pulling lustily through the rough waters of the sound, when a wave filled the boat. A general tumult ensued on board, while the weight of their numbers were fast sinking them beneath the waves. The disaster was seen from the ships, and by those on the shore, and numerous boats instantly started for their relief.— But they came too late. Cumbered with their accoutrements, they were unable to swim, and the most of them sunk to rise no more.

Ovando manfully buffeted the waves for some time, and one of the relief-boats had almost reached him, when a struggling soldier grasped him in his arms. In the agonies of drowning they fastened to each other, and sunk beyond reach, and ere the boat reached the spot, the bubbling waves had hid them from their view.

The next morning Myra awoke from the leaden slumbers, which had sealed her eyes, on the evening of the ever to be remembered day. The fatigue which she had undergone, appeared to have given an additional delicate whiteness to her skin, which was occasionally faintly tinged like the tints of the wild rose; and her before-perfect form of symmetry, finely proportioned by nature, seemed newly cast when attired in the simple, unadorned habiliments of the grand-daughter of her protectress, and she appeared more lovely than ever.

How different were the feelings of Myra on this morning, than on the preceding one, when she was aroused by the cry of war. Now the din of battle was hushed, and nought was heard but sad lamentations. The females of the family belonging to this house, had all returned, on learning of the evacuation of the city and garrison by the enemy. The two sons of the matron, however, were missing, and the anxious mother and sisters were bemoaning their loss. Soon after they sat out, with heavy hearts, for the garrison, in search of their remains.

Myra accompanied this afflicted family to Fort Griswold, where crowds of inhabitants were flocking from every direction, in search of their friends. Such a heart-rending scene was never before seen; wives and mothers were wandering among the cold, mangled bodies of the dead, in search of husbands and children. The sight was too shocking for Myra, and she walked on pensively to the shore, near the entrance of the harbour. The gentle undulations of the waters, as far as the eye could reach, appeared sparkling in the rays of the sun, which in splendour shone upon them; and she stood upon the sandy
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beach, contemplating the little surges as they chased each other to the shore, when something floating on the surface, at a short distance, attracted her attention. As it neared the shore she looked attentive on the floating mass, until a large wave in its course, threw it upon the beach at a short distance from the spot where she stood, when she discovered it was a human body.

Ever ready in the cause of duty and humanity she approached the lifeless form, and stooped to remove it farther upon the beach. The face of the corpse was turned from her, but in the act of removing it—Great God! what was her feelings! She recognized the features of her beloved father. Like a paralytic shock, it was too much for her tender frame to bear. The inactive body dropped from her feeble hold, and she fell senseless by its side!

The tide was fast flowing in, and the sporting waves soon reached in their course up the beach, the spot where the unfortunate Myra lay beside her drowned father. The dashing of the spray from the waves, sprinkled her marble-coloured temples, and once more restored her to life. She awoke as from a dream—the damp sand of the shore had struck a chill through her frame, and with scarcely strength to raise herself, she crawled to the bank of the shore, where, unable to proceed any further, she leaned against a rock with her eyes fixed upon the body of her father. Not a tear started from her eyes to ease the deep grief which was pictured in her countenance, for the flood-gates of sorrow seemed locked in the inmost recesses of her bosom.

An hour had elapsed, and still she sat bereft of the power of moving. A chilling sensation seemed to have overpowered her, when the dashing of oars in the water at a short distance from her, announced a boat near the spot; as if by instinct, she suddenly turned her head and discovered a small boat approaching the beach.

A faint cry of help from Myra, drew the attention of the boatmen as they, on landing, stood gazing upon

the body of Ovando, which they discovered lying on the shore. "It is my father!" mournfully said she, attempting to rise, and instantly falling back upon her rocky pillow. At the mournful sound they turned towards her, when humanity, that ever-ruling passion, predominant at the sight of a female in distress, immediately induced them to remove her to a neighbouring house, not far from the shore. Soon after which, the body of her father was also carried to the same dwelling, to be decently interred.

The extreme grief of youth and beauty in Myra, awakened the tender feelings of the inmates of the habitation where she was carried; for, like some weak flower of the garden, she appeared drooping under the afflicting stroke of the rude destroyer. As yet, not another word had escaped her silent lips, and unutterable woe seemed transfixed in her bosom, and appeared to have locked up all the flood-gates of her soul. Like a lily drooping beneath the rays of a scorching sun, she appeared bereft of animation and life.

Towards the close of day, the old lady, in whose charge she had been left by Ovando, missing her ward from the crowd around the fort, traced her to the shore, and at last, after some inquiry, found her in the house on the beach. Although she was a sad comforter to one in affliction, having then just returned from witnessing the interment of the last remains of two sons, who nobly fell the day previous, at the storming of the garrison, the tender feelings of her heart was again aroused at the sight of the suffering Myra; and with a mother's solicitude she kindly watched over the orphan, while the last sad rites were performed to the remains of her father, the deluded Ovando.

The next day Myra was removed to the farm-house of her protectress, where, although sorrow sunk deep upon her heart, her youth, and a good constitution, baffled her temporary illness, and soon restored her to the bloom of health.

There are situations in life, when every feeling can be aroused, and frail nature, which has been borne

down by the hand of affliction, will rise superior to the frowns of fortune. Myra was now an orphan. The endearing ties that bound her to a father and mother, had been severed by the hand of death — threw upon the world's tempestuous ocean, she was now left dependent upon the bounty of friends. — But that angel spirit of benevolence and humanity, tempered with a due resignation, which existed in the character of her lamented mother, was renewed in the daughter, and inspirited her to guide and direct her steps, by putting her trust in the hands of the Eternal.

On that memorable morning, when Cornelius left the habitation of his uncle, after his return from Boston, he pursued his route toward Connecticut river. Day was breaking in the east when the sound of cannon, thundering over the hills, struck upon his ears. Unwilling to proceed any further without ascertaining the cause of the alarm, he stopped at a neighbouring house. Too soon the war cry from every passing traveller, told him the danger which threatened the city, that he had just left. He immediately delivered the papers intrusted to his charge, into the hands of his servant, with directions to proceed with all possible despatch, and deliver them into the hands of the agent of Gen. C——, while he exchanged his horse, and instantly retraced his steps toward the city.

The unprotected situation of Myra induced him to hasten his return, and as he approached within a few miles of the city, the flying inhabitants were seen in every direction, seeking a refuge from the enemy, who were driving all before them.

Burning with military ardour, Cornelius entered the city, and his half-healed wounds seemed to lose their painfulness as he approached the theatre of danger. Every rising eminence that overlooked the city, was covered with his assembled countrymen, boldly defending them from the enemy. He joined the gallant band, who with heroic courage, were defending the summit of Town-hill. His valour and intrepidity was too conspicuous on this occasion, to re-

main long unnoticed. A party of the enemy were ascending the hill, determining to dislodge the armed citizens who contended with them.—Cornelius was foremost in opposing the lawless soldiery, and rushed upon them, victory following in his track; but a wound from the sabre of one of the regulars, compelled him to fall back. The exertion was too much for him, and fainting, he fell covered with blood and dust.

He was removed shortly after, to the side of the road, by some humane person, where the blood issuing from his wounds restored him to life; but weakness prevented him from seeking the necessary assistance. The shades of night set in, and with no covering but the canopy of heaven, he lay exposed to the dews of night.

The morning's dawn brought assistance.—He was discovered, and removed to the city, and carefully attended to for a few days, until pronounced out of danger. And now, alive to the feelings of sympathy, he anxiously enquired respecting the inmates of his uncle's habitation. The alarmed domestics had returned to the mansion, but could give no information respecting Myra.

Tortured with fear for her safety, as soon as his weakness would permit, he commenced his search. In the meantime his uncle received intelligence of the city's being burnt, and that his habitation was reduced to a heap of ruins. His visit in Vermont was cut short by this information, and he hurried home to return. The lovely Lucy shuddered at the thoughts of what her companion Myra, had suffered in the destruction of the city and garrison, and with joy anticipated the day when she should once more embrace her old companion.

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CHAPTER XVI.

Time passed rapidly on, and a few weeks had elapsed since the memorable day of the burning of
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the city, and Myra became anxious to hear from her friends on the otherside of the river. She accordingly dispatched a letter to her uncle, informing him of her place of residence.

The family were just seated at the breakfast table, when the servant brought in the letter from Myra.—An anxious solicitude was expressed on the countenances of Lucy and Cornelius as Mr. C. read the letter, and smiling, put it into the hands of Cornelius. Joy again flushed his cheeks, as he perused the letter, immediately on the finishing of which, he hastily arose and called for his horse. At the solicitation, however, of his uncle he again seated himself, when Mr. C. proposed they should all go and bring her to the city.

Soon after, the carriage was brought to the door. Mr. C. and Lucy took their seats and with Cornelius on horseback, they crossed the river, and proceeded to the farm house which had sheltered the orphan Myra. Language is inadequate to describe the affecting scene on again recovering the lovely daughter of Ovando. Every eye was wet with tears as she recounted to them the scenes she had witnessed; and when she came to that part where she discovered her father, drowned and thrown upon the beach by the waves, at her feet, her inaudible voice proclaimed that she was tearing afresh the wounds of affliction, which was scarcely cicatrized; and overcome with the sad recollections of the painful scene, she remained silent with her hands clasped in an agony of grief, until at length, unable to proceed, she exclaimed:—"Spare me the recital, my feelings will not permit me to proceed."

Unwilling to pain her gentle bosom by the melancholy recital of her sufferings, they soothed her overflowing heart, and soon after proposed to return to the city. As they left the house, Cornelius forced his purse into the hands of the aged matron, and mounting his horse, rode by the side of the carriage which contained his adored Myra.

On their arrival at the mansion-house, the domestics flocked around the orphan, and evinced the most unfeigned pleasure at her safe return.

Peace and quietude was again restored to the bosoms of this interesting circle of friends ; and as a tribute of respect to Myra, on account of the melancholy fate of her father, they put on the habiliments of mourning. Myra, enveloped in her sable dress, appeared more lovely than before, for although grief had in some measure faded the rose on her cheeks, yet the exquisite whiteness of her skin was heightened by their departure, and excited a touching feeling of sensibility in the beholders.

The wounds of Cornelius had become almost entirely healed, but still they left him in a feeble state of health, which induced him to leave the army for a time ; but his ever active and enterprising spirit soon induced him to try his fortune on another element, and enter on board of some privateer, where his health would be benefitted by the sea voyage, and he, probably, have an opportunity of fighting for his country, or at least for his country's flag. Accordingly an opportunity was soon presented, and with high hopes he entered on board the Vengeance privateer, then fitting out for a cruise.

Cornelius could not, however, leave the shores of his native land, without once more taking a ramble, and indulging himself in his favourite amusement of hunting. He had for some weeks longed for an excursion of the kind, and now resolved to gratify himself. Accordingly two mornings previous to his sailing, he started, accompanied by his faithful servant and two hounds. They pursued their sport for the most part of the day, when the hounds had led Cornelius and his man so far from home, that it was impossible to think of returning on that day : besides night had unexpectedly overtaken them. They were in a part of the country which was far from being pleasant, and to add to their situation, they were totally unacquainted in those parts. However, after wandering for some time they struck the path ; and, on emerging from the woods to enter the road, they came unexpectedly upon a man who was fishing beside a pond, situated at the foot of a lofty hill, covered with trees, rocks, and craggy cliffs. But, on

seeing them, he precipitately left his fishing and fled to the mountain, and was immediately hid from their view by the intervening objects.

The wild and gloomy situation of this part of the country, was not calculated to inspire feelings of pleasure ; and, fatigued with the chase and long fasting, Cornelius was anxious to find some habitation to procure refreshment for himself and servant. The sudden departure of the fishermen prevented his speaking to him, and he despatched his man to the spot where he had disappeared, to ascertain whether there was a habitation near, and seated himself by the margin of the pond to await his return.

A few moments had only elapsed during the absence of his man, when a rustling in the bushes behind him induced him to turn his head, and the figure of a person, gliding through the small trees and brush-wood, caught his eye. Cornelius, like a true soldier, ever ready on the look out, cocked his fowling piece, and silently awaited his appearance in the open road, keeping his eye steadily fixed on the entrance into the thicket.

In a few minutes the person made his appearance in the road, a few paces distant from him. Cornelius rose at his approach, enquiring the nearest habitation, and was informed, in a voice which evidently appeared a feigned one, that two miles was the nearest to any house ; and in addition to this, the road lay through a dark thick woods, which, in the day time, seemed almost to shut out the light of Heaven, and rendered it a black and gloomy passage in the night. But fear was a stranger to his bosom ; although he requested the favor of the man to guide him to the place. The man hesitated for some time, during which his servant returned and informed him that he could discover nothing of the person who was fishing, but that he had found a rude hut, composed of brush and stone, which was hid from all observation, among the craggy rocks on the side of the hill,

During the conversation of Cornelius and his servant, the stranger fixed his dark penetrating eye on them, and as Cornelius announced his intention of

visiting the spot, a tremendous frown lowered over his countenance. The thought instantly struck Cornelius that the rude hut was the dwelling of the fisherman, and that this was the person present. He turned to the stranger, enquiring if he lived in the vicinity, and whether he had seen a person fishing in the pond a few moments before.

“No!” replied the man abruptly. “Do you think any person in his right senses could inhabit this gloomy place—fit only for a den of robbers, or wild beasts?”

“I neither know nor care,” returned Cornelius.

The servant asserted that some one resided among the rocks, as fire and some cooking utensils were still then in the rude dwelling. “We will visit it then,” said Cornelius, and turning, he invited the stranger to accompany them.

“My business is in another direction,” replied he, and abruptly left them.

They were somewhat surprised at the singular actions and manners of the person who had just left them, but proceeded to the habitation on the side of the hill. The frightful appearance of the ponderous rocks, which lay in a confused mass from the base to the summit of this mountain, almost deterred Cornelius from proceeding. The steep hill with its craggy sides interspersed with trees and large broken fragments of stone, which time, the resistless decay of all things, had loosened from their beds, and tottering they appeared ready to fall from their lofty stations and crush all before them in their course.—But the stillness of death seemed to reign around the frightful spot: even the pond of water at the foot was unruffled, and presented its surface like a sheet of glass, which the darkness around made look black and dismal.

They began to ascend the steep, clambering with difficulty the rocks, which seemed starting from their foundations at every step. At length they reached the rude dwelling and entered the door. Fire was still burning on the hearth, and a few cooking utensils were seen in one corner; and, hanging against the

wall, was a rifle, sword and pistols. They immediately seated themselves, resolving to await the occupant of this dreary place, presuming that he could not be far distant, judging from the neglectful appearance of every thing around. After sitting in this place for some time, and no one appearing, they sallied forth to seek a house where refreshment might be obtained; for hunger had begun to make loud calls upon them. In descending the hill they again saw the man who had so abruptly left them; but, on being discovered, he vanished amongst the rocks and trees which covered the side of the mountain.

Cornelius and his servant, on reaching the road proceeded through the woods which the stranger had pointed out to them. Hunger hurried them on, and they arrived at a farm house. A rustic peasant met them at the door and welcomed them in. His dame was about forty, and one of those whose tongues seemed hung in the middle, and never cease their volubility while an object is near for them to dwell on; and that spirit of curiosity so prevalent among the New England people to find out who and what every one's business is, soon manifested itself in the farmer and his dame.

Not satisfied with the frank answers of Cornelius, that they were simply a citizen and servant on a hunting excursion, and were accidentally benighted; but they worried him with suppositions, that from some part of his dress, he was now or had been an officer, and seen many a battle fought. To all of which he replied in monosyllables, "yes and no." At length, weary and fatigued, he requested a bed, and retired for the night, resolving to arise early and return to the mountain and make further discoveries to satisfy himself who inhabited the side of this hill.

Accordingly, the next morning at early dawn, he arose, and bidding his host farewell, proceeded to the pond, and again ascended the steep hill by its side; but judge his surprise, after clambering up the rocks to the spot where the rude hut had stood, to find nothing remained but a heap of rubbish. The

rough walls of stone which formed its sides, had, in the night been demolished, and in the centre, a huge rock, which had been thrown from the cliff above, filled the centre, and nothing denoted any human being around the spot.

After making these discoveries he descended to join his servant, when they hastened their return to the city, revolving in their minds the mysterious circumstances attending the strange dwelling of the mountain.

His return to the city was just in time, for the privateer was on the point of sailing, and, he had only time to take his leave of friends and get his things on board ere the signal gun announced her hour of departure, and soon after the white shores, at the entrance of the harbour, receded from his view, and he saw nothing but the vast expanse of waters around him.

CHAPTER XVII.

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The Marauder party, after being ferreted out by the vigilance of the police officers, and part of their gang taken, had at length separated to elude the eagle eyes of justice. Vantor, the leader of the gang, after secreting himself for some time, came to the city in disguise, and had on the morning of the sailing of Cornelius, entered on board the same privateer. The crew of this vessel, although made up principally of abandoned and dissolute fellows, were not void of honor. Their object was, by this fashionable mode of plunder, to recruit the slender remains of their fortunes, and harass the commerce of the enemies of their country.

The Vengeance sailed from the offing of the harbor, on her first cruise at this time with a crew of ninety men, all anxious to fall in with some prize. Cornelius, whose place it was to see that every man

did his duty, was ever active and on the alert. His unassuming, mild manners and correct deportment soon gained him the respect of the whole crew, among whom, unbeknown to him, was the arch chief of the Marauder party. The dark eye of the Marauder frequently rested on the figure of the youthful Cornelius, as he with a lofty commanding step, walked the deck. Cornelius had observed this sailor, and there was something in his looks and manners which made him shudder whenever he caught him gazing with a fixing stare, and he avoided him as much as possible.

On the fourth day of her cruise, the man at mast-head announced a sail in sight, bearing down towards them. Every eye was at once strained to discover who and what she was; and the deck was immediately cleared for action for fear of being taken by surprise. At length the red cross of England was seen floating in the breeze from her maintopmast head, and her black sides bore every appearance of a man of war. At this sight, a council of the officers on board the privateer assembled on the quarter deck, while the Briton was bearing down upon them under a press of sail.

To the question put to the council by the commander of the privateer:—"Shall we fight her?"—A dead silence for some minutes ensued, each waiting for the other to reply. At length Cornelius stepped forward, and in a manly voice addressed them. His language seemed to arouse their sleeping energies and inspire a daring courage throughout all on board; and they instantly called all hands to quarters, determined to fight her, and conquer or die.

Immediately after, a gun from the man of war announced her hostile intention as she neared them with her ports open. The soul of Cornelius blazed in his eyes, as he took his station on the fore-castle, and issued orders to the men under his charge. The striped banner of his country waved over their heads, and as he pointed in triumph to this emblem of his country's glory, the dreadful fight commenced.—Grape and canister shot flew like hail stones from

the man-of-war, cutting their rigging and sweeping their men from the decks, like blasted lightning.— To board her, sword in hand, was now the only alternative of the privateer, and they ran her along side. The bugleman had scarce sounded the boarders to the charge, when Cornelius mounted her sides, followed by about fifty of his companions. His eyes shot gleams of light as with a bound, he alighted on the deck of his Britannic Majesty's vessel, and encountered the bossed phalanx of pikes and swords before him. He grasped with a firm hold his steely broad sword, and closely followed by his brave associates, rushed forward to the charge, while deadly blows fell on all sides, until he and his brave companions were driven back, wounded and bleeding over the Briton's sides to their own vessel.

By this time the privateer lay like a log upon the water ; both fore and main masts had been shot by the board, and nothing remained to fasten her colours to but a temporary jury-mast which the dauntless crew had hastily erected, and from whose top streamed the stars and stripes of their country. At this instant the boarders from the man-of-war, in their turn, precipitated themselves on her deck, with fiend-like boldness. Cornelius, like the God of war calmly surveyed them, while they descended down upon them, crowding her decks. It was then he defended himself with a giant's strength and the slippery decks were deluged with blood which poured its crimson torrent from her sides dying with its red hue the foaming ocean. Already had four of the enemy fell beneath his manly arm, when he was surrounded by superior numbers. Like a lion, he defended himself, untill pierced with an hundred swords and pikes, he was just ready to totter and fall, when Venter, the strange sailor, rushed to his assistance. Like a destroying angel, his track from the quarter deck to the forecastle, was marked with slain, while from his sten-torian lungs, the thunder of his voice sounded amidst the din of battle. With eyes glaring like meteors, and a countenance distorted with rage, he looked like a being of another class, clothed in awful

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vengeance. The fate of the battle now seemed to depend on his arm, and like the bolt of the thunder cloud, he dealt death and destruction around. Appalled, the enemy left the decks of the privateer, leaving their killed and wounded on board, while the thunder of the cannon and the roar of the musketry, drowned the shrieks of the wounded and the groans of the dying.

A cessation of hostilities between the two vessels now took place, as almost every officer on board the privateer was either killed or wounded; while the Briton lay like some old hulk on the water, with every spar shot away, and nearly one half of her crew killed and wounded, and both appeared unable to renew the conflict.

Faint with the loss of blood, Cornelius had fell on the deck at the cessation of the fight. Venter raised him in his arms, and with the assistance of one of the men, restored him to life. His wounds, though not dangerous, were numerous, and some of them deep; but his intrepid soul disdained confinement from slight wounds, and no sooner were they dressed, than he was again on the deck ministering to his brave companions who were wounded with him.

At length the shades of night threw her dark mantle over the waves as the two contending vessels lay like wrecks upon the mass of waters. The decks of the privateer was soon disencumbered of the slain, and their bodies consigned to the vasty deep. But the stillness of the night was repeatedly broke upon by the groans of the wounded. Cornelius and Venter had been watching them and walking the deck for some time, when they saw a signal light, and heard guns of distress in the direction of the man-of-war. Ever ready to the calls of humanity, all hands were immediately called, and they, with what sail they could muster, bore away for the brig of war. They had scarcely reached within gun shot, all anxious to relieve an enemy in distress, when she again opened her batteries upon them.

Such a base attack at this time aroused the sleeping vengeance of every one on board, and they now

resolved to conquer or die. They fought no longer for plunder or honor, but for revenge, and the fire of madness seemed to blaze in the eyes of all on board. Again the thunder of cannon and the flash of musketry gleamed in the darkness around, while thick columns of smoke arose ascending to the heavens, enveloping both of the contending vessels in their murky clouds. Again was Vantor seen cheering his companions in arms. His anger seemed at its height : and his gigantic form appeared invulnerable, as he passed from one part of the privateer to another, amidst a shower of bullets, whizzing through the shattered rigging and over the decks, dealing death and destruction around.

For an instant, the din of battle seemed to cease on board the Briton, as the two vessels, constantly nearing each other, at length closed ; but it was a deceitful calm. The shrill notes of the bugleman on board the man-of-war sounding the boarders to the charge, put the privateersmen on their guard ; and they prepared to receive them. Almost every officer on board the privateer had been carried below, but the wounded Cornelius still maintained his station on the quarter-deck, while he gave the charge of the fore-castle to the intrepid stranger, Vantor. The guns of each vessel, as it were, instantly ceased as the Britons in crowds descended upon the decks of the privateer ; and Cornelius again fought with the fury of a tiger. In frenzy, he grasped his bleeding blade with a firmer hold, as he descried among the enemy the towering figure of the boarding officer : and while the deafening din of the battle drowned the cries of the wounded, they were constantly nearing each other, until at length they met. Like blood-hounds, they closed upon each other with deadly fury, while, breathless, the rest stood gazing upon these two warriors. They parted. Again they encountered each other, and fire flew at every stroke from their steely blades. Thrice was Cornelius, with a backward step, compelled to retreat under the heavy claymore of his adversary, until, with one mighty stroke, he struck the crimsoned steel

from the Briton's hands, and again they closed. Like the ivy twining the towering tree of the forest, they coiled around each other, when Cornelius, shortening the point of his sword, plunged it through his body, and with a bound, pressing forward, measured his antagonist on the deck.—At this finishing act, a shout rent the air, which those on board the man-of-war mistook for victory, and answered with reiterated huzzas !—The fight still raged, but their leader was now no more, and the intrepid Vantor and Cornelius compelled them to seek their safety on board the other vessel, which instantly loosened from the privateer, and was soon borne by the wind and waves at some distance from her.

Cornelius, although wounded, bleeding at every pore, and sick with the sight of blood and slaughter, was determined now to renew the fight, and not to surrender, but to conquer, or sink beneath the black waters, which in mountain waves surrounded them, and accordingly called a council of all on board.—Faint and weary, the gallant crew attended his last call, when he briefly informed them of his intention of taking them or sinking alongside. He was answered by the desperate slogan of "conquer or die !" —and the deck was again cleared for action, while they, with what few shattered sails they could set, bore down upon her, and commenced the fight. But it was of short duration. The gathering storm which had been brewing in the heavens, compelled them to desist ; and the elements, which so late had been calm and serene, now contended with each other. No longer was seen the lightning flash of the thundering cannon ; but the awful bolt in reality now roared through the vaulted expanse, illuminating the foaming ocean, with its brilliant streaks of living flame ; and, appalled, they viewed, while tossed upon the mountain billows, the sublime, terrific, and grand battle of the elements, waged by an higher power than they !

All at once a deafening roar, which sounded like the crash of a thousand thunders, struck upon their ears ; and a brilliant column of flame, ascending to

the clouds, proclaimed to them that their adversary, the man-of-war, had blown up. A beam of lightning, which but an instant before illuminated the darkness around, had struck the magazine and blew her into ten thousand pieces. Lights were immediately hung out from on board the privateer, to direct any one to the spot in case they survived the dreadful explosion. But darkness reigned a round; and the stillness of death seemed to enwrap ocean and sky for an instant after this awful event. But soon again the whistling of the wind and the roar of the waters were heard, and the tremendous waves tost them in wild commotion, threatening every instant to engulf them also in ocean's grave.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

There is nothing that inspires a greater degree of awe, than the awful visitations of the Eternal; and the instantaneous exit of so many souls from time into eternity, after braving death at the sword's point, and facing him at the cannon's mouth, struck a terror throughout all on board the privateer. And much as they had sought to wreak on them their vengeance in a fair fight, they could not but lament the awful visitation of an angry God, who had by one blast from the artillery of Heaven, destroyed their foe forever.

The next morning nothing could be seen of the proud vessel, which had so lately rode upon the bosom of the waves, bidding defiance in the deadly fight. Not a vestige of her remained upon the mass of waters, and not a soul had survived that was on board, to tell the tale of woe, or proclaim his deeds of valour in the battle's din, in which so late they had been engaged; but sunk beneath the black wa-

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ters, the sea nymphs sang their requiem to their coral bed, and the hoarse murmurs of the mountain billow lulled them into the sleep of death !

Preparations were now made on board the privateer to put themselves in repair, and clear the decks of their bleeding comrades. Out of ninety men thirty brave souls had taken their flight to the world of spirits, and their bodies were now consigned to a watery grave. Cornelius and Vantor, like ministering angels were constantly aiding and assisting their wounded companions, who had so gallantly defended the privateer from the superior number of men and guns which she had to contend with in their late engagement. By great exertions, in a few days juremasts were erected, and a new set of sails bent, and they directed their course for the nearest port. In the mean time, the wounds which Cornelius had received in battle, had by neglect, become painful, and he at length suffered them to be dressed again.— During the operation he was attended by his friend and now constant companion, Vantor.

It may not be amiss here, to state some thing respecting this daring man, whom Cornelius had taken as his constant companion, and whom he looked upon almost a being of another class, sent by the wisdom of Providence to watch over and protect him from his enemies. Vantor was the son of a wealthy farmer in the eastern part of Massachusetts, and at an early age, on the first sparks of the revolution being kindled by the battle of Lexington, had left his paternal home, and was one of the foremost in joining his assembled countrymen in taking up arms against their common enemy. At length, disgusted with his treatment from a superior officer, he dared to assert his right, and resent a blow which he had received from his commander, and with a burning cheek he deserted his country's cause. A series of events had leagued him with a band of lawless wretches, who lived by plunder, both on sea and land. By daring bravery, he became leader of the gang, and exacted from them the most solemn oaths, on the violation of which, as a penalty, they were cut from the face of the earth.

On the seizure of a part of this Marauder gang, by the civil authority, he effected his escape, carrying with him a considerable quantity of treasure which he had accumulated, and fled to an unfrequented part of the country. There he brooded over his wayward life, until like a hermit, he learned to shun society. He had, unmolested, enjoyed this kind of living for some time, when he was surprised by Cornelius on his hunting excursion. It was then he abandoned his solitary habitation, and on that night, after destroying it, returned to the city, resolving to brave a detection, and again mingle with society. But on learning of the sailing of the privateer, he immediately entered on board. On their departure he recognized Cornelius, and knew him. His engaging manner and commanding deportment, struck him with an indelible impression, and he sought every opportunity of gaining his notice, and of becoming acquainted with him. But the ever watchful Cornelius eluded as much as possible, his eagle eye, and fawning manner, until after the engagement with the man of war. He then saw that he was brave and humane, for thrice had he in the heat of the fight received in his own bosom, the blows that had been aimed at his life, and he owed him a debt of gratitude, which time only could pay; and as the brave always love the brave, Cornelius embraced his deliverer.

Ventor had given him, undisguised, a narrative of his life, and although he saw in his deliverer the once detested destroyer of the father of his Myra, and an outcast from society and his country, he could not but admire that calm resignation with which he buffeted the storms of fortune, and with sincere pleasure embraced him, when he heard him in the ardent language of penitence renounce the proceedings of his former life. In speaking of Ovando, the father of Myra, he paid a just tribute to the manly virtues that he possessed: and although he deprecated that proceeding of his in entering the army of Britain, he knew that the sound of mercy from one of his countrymen would never enter the ear of Ovando, and plead in vain; for as much a wretch as

Ovando was in leaguings himself with the Marauder party, he possessed feelings that did honour to him notwithstanding his rashness.

He knew not where the rest of the gang were, for since Edwin, his early companion, had abandoned them, he cared not for any other except Ovando; and when necessity compelled them to yield to the strong arm of the law, it was like severing the cords of life to see him seized by the civil authority, and it was joyful news to him when he heard that he had eluded the eagle eyes of justice, and escaped to New-York.

The property which Ovando had once placed in his hands, was safe and secure and on learning from Cornelius that Myra, the orphan daughter of Ovando, still survived the wreck of her father's family, he nobly resolved to return to her that ill-gotten wealth which had troubled him in his waking moments, and tormented with frightful dreams his sleeping hours.—

It was his determination as soon as they arrived in port to re-visit the land of his nativity, and settle in retirement near the friends of his early days.

Cornelius seconded these noble resolutions of his preserver, and rejoiced that the pure principles of love and patriotism had again returned to one, who seemed born to move in a higher and more respectable sphere than a traitor and lawless outcast from his country.

Contrary winds, and the shattered state of their vessel prevented for some days their arrival in port. They were within but one day's sail of the District of Maine, when they encountered a severe storm, which drove them off the coast. It was with the utmost difficulty in their then ruined and shattered situation, that they lived through the gale. Twice during the continuance of the dreadful storm they almost despaired, and supposed themselves destined for a watery grave. It was in these critical moments, that Vantor displayed the firmness of his mind, and inspired the drooping spirits of all on board to exertion. Success crowned their efforts and again they hailed the land in a situation which almost baffled

description. Every gun had been thrown or washed overboard, and all their water and provisions thrown into the sea to lighten the vessel, which was fast filling with water. Notwithstanding they kept their pumps going it was fast gaining upon them. Wet, cold, faint and weary, was every man on board. All were completely beat out except Venter, and he alone with an unflagging zeal persevered, and still appeared the least exhausted. With an unmoved countenance and a steady hand, he guided and directed the crazy vessel through the awful scene.

On the day after this storm they reached one of the eastern ports, after an unsuccessful cruise of three months, in which they had encountered death in almost every shape, and reduced by hardship and fatigue to an almost abject state of wretchedness.—This voyage had cured Cornelius of his sea-faring notions—for, although his bold intrepid soul could brave the dangers of the field of battle or the terrors of a dreadful sea-fight, still by his inexperience in the art of navigation, he was somewhat appalled in the hour of danger, when storms arise and threaten to overwhelm the vessel in the mass of waters.

On the arrival of Venter and Cornelius in port, they stayed but a few days to recruit them after the fatigues of their cruise, when they started for Boston, on their return to the city of New-London. The few rolling months which they had been absent, had made some changes in the country, and the population were now looking forward with pleasing hopes for sweet notes of peace. On their arriving in Boston, Cornelius learnt the success of his friend Edwin, who but a few months previous, had sailed from that place, and taken a British transport which he then commanded. The privateer in which he had first sailed, had but a day previous arrived in port, bringing the pleasing intelligence.

Cornelius and Edwin had been companions and fellow soldiers together, and encountered the hardships of an Indian war on our western borders. Accident had put it into their power to save each other's lives ;—and although no tie of blood united them,

yet never were two souls more knit to each other. The ties of love and friendship bound them in the mutual chains of gratitude, as pure and lasting as the bands of holy wedlock. One short year only had they been companions. Edwin was a volunteer whom no one knew, but his services were accepted, and well did he evince his devotedness to the cause, and like the gallant Boyd* and his twenty brave countrymen who fell covered with glory, he was beloved and respected by the whole army.

At the close of this campaign, when Cornelius was compelled to retire from the army in consequence of his wounds, Edwin had likewise left them to seek renown and glory on the sea. Boston was his port of sailing, and their place of rendezvous to meet; but he had left the harbour ere Cornelius arrived there, a few days previous to the burning of New-London.

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CHAPTER XIX.

The passing events of the day were unheeded at the mansion house of Mr. C. and Lucy and Myra in mutual confidence, reposed in each others bosom all their thoughts respecting Cornelius; for from the day that he sailed from the offing of the harbor, nothing had been heard of the vessel.—Among the numerous prizes captured and sent into the different ports there was none as yet that belonged to the Vengeance privateer, and anxiety and alarm would occasionally manifest itself in the ever feeling bosom of Myra for the fate of Cornelius; while Lucy tried by every art to account for the deadly silence which had existed for so many weeks respecting his vessel. At one

*Lieut. Boyd, a gallant officer, and twenty men, were surprised and cut to pieces, in covering a party occupied in constructing a bridge over the Seneca, on the march of Gen Clinton's army, to conquer the Six Nations.

time she would attempt to ease the fear of Myra, by saying that he forbore to inform them respecting himself, until by some gallant action he had taken some of the enemy and enriched him forever ; and at another, that Cornelius had put into some foreign port, from whence it was difficult to transmit information to his friends. Thus would the ever feeling Lucy, attempt to calm the mind of Myra, at the deadly silence which existed respecting her lover.

Things were in this way, and nothing had as yet been heard of him, when one evening just as twilight had began to fade away, Mr. C. came into the room, his countenance irradiated with smiles, and presented to Myra a letter.—On casting her eyes upon it, she instantly recognized the well known characters traced by the hand of Cornelius, and with a fluttering heart she broke the seal. It was short and contained a brief description of the engagement with the man of war of the enemy, and of their final destruction by lightning, after the bloody fight—He spoke of a friend, who had during the engagement, shielded him from the swords of the enemy, and thrice saved his life at the imminent risk of his own ; and mentioned that a few days would probably bring himself and his preserver to the house of his uncle.

In addition to the letter of Myra's, Mr. C. had also received one from him, giving a particular description of his voyage, and engagement with the enemy, and the obligations which he was under to the stranger, who seemed like some guardian angel to watch over and protect him in the hour of danger.

Preparations were immediately made at the mansion house to receive Cornelius and his companion, and Myra and Lucy joyfully anticipated the day of his arrival. A week however elapsed and nothing more was heard, when Mr. C. received another letter from him, announcing the happy intelligence, that on the next day he started from Boston, with his friend, on their way to New-London.

The day following was dark and rainy, and Lucy and Myra were confined to the house, awaiting anxiously for their expected visitors ; however the

day passed off, and no Cornelius arrived. But early the next morning, the hurry and confusion of the domestics below, announced to Myra that something uncommon had occurred, or that Cornelius and his friend had arrived, and she arose, with a fluttering heart. Whether she was induced from the expectation of seeing Cornelius, to spend more time at her toilet than usual, or not, but she first put on one thing and then another, until her exhausted patience to please herself in her attire, compelled her to summon her companion Lucy to assist her in dressing.

Finally she completed her morning toilet and taking up a book seated herself at the window, but her wandering thoughts strayed from the subject which she was attempting to read, and perplexed with the contending feelings which agitated her frame, she descended from her room and entered the garden, where she was soon joined by Lucy who had just finished dressing. Arm in arm they sauntered through the spacious walks of the domain, until the sun peeping from beneath the tops of the eastern hills, began to throw his broad beams over the decayed verdure of the plants and shrubs around.

At length they came towards the house, and was just entering the dwelling when Mr. C. met them at the door, and informed them that Cornelius and his friend had just arrived, and was then in the sitting room anxiously waiting to see them. Their morning walk had arrayed in roses their lovely cheeks, and the crimson glow of health suffused their beautiful faces in its richest tints, while smiling he accompanied them to the door, and gaily ushered them into the room. Cornelius rose at their entrance, and after embracing them both, presented Venter, his friend and preserver. It is impossible to describe the mingled emotions of Myra on glancing her eyes over the manly form of the companion of Cornelius. His tall majestic figure arrayed in the habiliments of a privateersman, and accoutered in the simple unadorned dress of a common sailor, together with his lofty commanding deportment, evinced that he was not what his present appearance

indicated. As he stood gazing at her on their first appearance, he seemed wrapped in profound study, while occasionally from beneath his long dark lashes, his eyes beamed with peculiar brightness. And for some time after his introduction, a distance seemed to pervade his movements whenever he conversed with her, and occasionally a big tear gathered in his eyes as he contemplated her sable dress. But whenever he cast his eyes on Lucy, a fixed stare announced some inward working of his mind, and he trembled for an instant like some wretched being on the brink of dissolution.

Cornelius observed that the feelings of his friend were uncommonly wrought upon at the sight of his adopted cousin Lucy, and vainly conjectured the cause. His fixed stare and trembling manner whenever he gazed at her, astonished and confounded him: and whenever the sound of her voice struck upon his ear he started like one in a dream, and looked wildly around the room, and as she, moved his wandering eye incessantly followed her. The breakfast however was soon announced, and Cornelius placed his friend on one side and Myra on the other, appeared arrived at the summit of his wishes; and no sooner was the table removed than he, with that grace peculiar to himself, enlivened the whole company with his interesting descriptions on various subjects.

Notwithstanding the enlivening conversation of Cornelius and Mr. C. Ventor the Marauder Chief, by whose name we must still call him, appeared unusually sad for the most part of the day. His wandering thoughts seemed incessantly pondering on something, while his eyes would occasionally rest on the figure of Lucy, and arrayed as she was in the garb of innocence, her lovely appearance would then seem to ravish his sight. He who had braved the thunder of war, and amid the tremendous battle when death and destruction raged around and appeared calm and collected, with eyes flashing the fire of a warrior, was in the presence of an inoffensive female, trembling and abashed, and seemed

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awe struck by something which he saw in the adopted daughter of Mr. C.

Supposing Lucy in reality the daughter of Mr. C. his mind towards evening gradually became composed, and he listened to the soft tones of Myra as she accompanied her instrument, and he was busily engaged in conversation, when Lucy taking her seat at the piano, commenced a favorite air, on the first notes of which striking his ear, he started as if aroused by the clarion of war, his eyes seemed starting from their sockets, every nerve appeared convulsed, and staggering he fell senseless on the floor, from whence he was conveyed to his room. Cornelius watched over him until at length he awoke from his swoon, and hastily enquired what had happened to him. Shortly after he recollected himself, and apologising, stated the cause of his feelings at some melancholy recollections on hearing the favorite air of Lucy, and the circumstance passed off unnoticed, although it appeared singular. After this he was ever gay and cheerful, and nothing seemed to disturb the tranquillity of his mind.

A few weeks residence at the mansion house of Mr. C. completely enchained Venter to the object to whom he seemed to direct all his attention, and Cornelius and Mr. C. thought they saw a growing passion manifested for Lucy, and encouraged it as far as delicacy and the strict rules of decorum would allow. Not considering his age, they fondly anticipated that on some day not far distant, his attachment would ripen into affection and they would be united.

In the mean while Cornelius declared his love for Myra. But placed in the situation she then was, she knew not what to do. She loved Cornelius, and while the crimson glow suffused her cheeks, and mantled her face and neck with blushes, she acknowledged that he was not indifferent to her. But she was an orphan, poor and friendless—the hand of misfortune had been laid heavy upon her, and accumulated misery seemed to have followed in her train from the hour of her birth. She had been tost upon a sea of trouble and had buffeted its waves. Her uncle had

succoured and protected her, when in the hour of adversity she had been abandoned by her father—that father had paid the debt of all living, and had been consigned to an untimely grave. Mother Monomia, the friend and companion of her lamented mother, still lived and enjoyed her usual health in the loved spot of her nativity. This was a sweet consolation to her, for she knew that she had a lasting friend and protectress in this aged matron; but, lingering as she was on the confines of the grave, she knew not how soon Infinite Jehovah might snatch her also.

Myra knew not that she possessed a cent of property, the dwelling of her infant days she supposed had gone with the wreck of all her father's possessions. Therefore she considered herself as wholly dependent on the bounty of her uncle; but there was one thought that cheered her in her sad and gloomy moments: that was, that an Omnipotent and Allwise Providence had so far protected her and bountifully supplied all her wants; and for this she failed not to offer up her morning and evening prayers.

She sought the counsel of her uncle and unfolded to him her heart. He like a fond father pressed her to his bosom, and while he wept over her, sanctioned her choice, and in the ardent language of his soul expressed the maternal feelings of a parent to the lovely orphan. A few days after Cornelius received the wished for promise from Myra, to be made the happiest of men, and the day was appointed for their nuptials. It was fast approaching and splendid preparations were made by Mr. C. to celebrate the ceremony in a style suitable to the occasion. The intervening time was spent by Myra and her companion Lucy, in preparing her for the approaching event.

During this time, often did Myra meditate upon the scenes she had witnessed; and the prophetic words of old Lille, the pretended fortune teller, frequently occurred to her recollection. She saw again in imagination her tall masculine figure, which looked like some ancient tree of the forest, stripped of its vernal covering, but still seemed to withstand the winds of the wintry blast, while its old decayed trunk and

branches trembled from the least shock. She thought of the wild ditty she had sung, and the words

“Death comes o’er the sea”

which she had laid a particular stress upon, when she fixed her penetrating eyes upon her. From the day that she had visited the mansion house, to tell her fortune, she had ceased coming to the dwelling. This had been remarked by the ever gay and volatile Lucy, and she proposed to Myra to visit the old hag at her residence.

Accordingly the next evening they stole from the mansion-house, leaving Venter and Cornelius at a game of chess, and repaired secretly to the hovel of Lille. Darkness veiled the rude building when they cautiously lifted the latch and entered the dwelling. She was busy attending to her domestic concerns and appeared not to notice the coming of any one until Lucy called her by name. At the sound of a voice she turned her head towards them and instantly caught the countenance of Myra, upon which she uttered a horrid scream, which seemed to ring through the roof of the building and echoed in dismal sounds from the rough walls of her dwelling in the same shrill notes. Standing for a moment gazing wildly around, she tottered to a chair, to which both Lucy and Myra immediately ran, enquiring the cause of her sudden indisposition. But she uttered not a word, and only rolled her large fiery eyes in frenzy, clenching her long bony fingers in an apparent agony. At length she gradually recovered and arose as if nothing had happened, and assuming her usual veil of mystery, motioned them to a seat. Awe struck and confounded with the inexplicable actions of this black sorceress, Myra with the assistance of Lucy attempted to apologize to her for their visit, when she turned her large eyes upon them, and waving her hand, in a hollow sepulchral voice, replied, “I know thy object. But the orphan’s tears have prevailed; high heaven has heard my morning and evening prayers, and the wicked have at length become virtuous,”—and turning to Lucy, she continued, “but thou, lovely vir-

gin, art no longer an orphan. Thy sire yet lingers in the land of the living, noble, brave, humane, and just. In three days thou wilt see him, and the veil of mystery will be torn asunder and unfolded to you.—Yes, tender vine, thou hast yet the aged oak of the forest to cling unto, and at the foot of the altar where the valiant Cornelius receives the orphan daughter of Ovando and Almyra, you will there find your father.”

She ceased speaking, and returned to her occupation about the house, while Lucy and Myra, almost thunder-struck, gazed upon her; for while speaking her attitude seemed like some grave image with an arm extended, and the tones of her voice sounded to them like the muttering thunder at a distance in the heavens. Without speaking a word they silently left the hovel and slowly retraced their steps towards home, astonished and confounded at what had just been unfolded to them.

As they had been absent for some time, Vantor and Cornelius had missed their company, and walked out to meet them, supposing they had wandered to the shores of the Thames.—Not finding them in their rambles on the shore, they returned to the mansion-house where on their arrival they ascertained that the ladies had retired to rest.

It was in vain Lucy and Myra pondered over the mysterious conduct of old Lille; and Lucy, whose mind had been highly cultivated, was staggered with the prophetic words, that on the day of the nuptials of Cornelius and Myra, she should “three find her father!”—Was her father then living and unknown to her and Mr. C.; or had this Sybil of the city, in the wildness of her imagination, and in a frenzy of passion, predicted a falsehood, in wantonness to torture her feelings until the day arrived that was to unite Cornelius and Myra in the silken chains of Hymen?—From what little she knew of her parents it seemed utterly impossible that her father should still exist:—He was a soldier, and had left her lamented mother ere she, a destined orphan, saw the light of heaven. Evidence, incontestible evidence had once

been produced that he was slain, and that his remains slept beneath a rising hillock on Bunker's Mount, where he fell covered with glory in bravely defending his country from the iron hand of despotism. With the gallant Warren, he fought, and with him it was reported that he fell. It was the melancholy news of his death which came like a thunderbolt and had cut off from the face of the earth her mother, when she was an infant, and had thus left her an orphan fatherless and motherless. But her lot was cast among the humane and benevolent.—She had been adopted into the family of Mr. C. as their own, and she felt the bonds of affection which bound her to them, as strong and lasting as the ties of blood; they had with a parent's solicitude guided, directed and watched over her, when helpless and unprotected the Eternal King had taken to his courts above her sainted mother, and in infinite mercy supplied her with a second father and mother. But in three days the veil would be rent asunder, and truth or falsehood stamp their seal upon the solemn words of the prophetess.

Myra was also involved in a labyrinth of doubt. Was the secret recesses of her heart laid open to this woman, and the solemn engagement which she had made to Cornelius, so soon revealed to her by this witch, for who could have informed Lille that her fate was bound up in that of Cornelius? Her consent had scarcely passed her lips, and no living mortal knew of the engagement, save the members of the family, and yet it had been borne, as on the wings of the wind, to this Sybil, who seemed veiled in mystery as unaccountable as it was wonderful, and she could not help trembling whenever the visit occurred to her mind. But the momentous day was drawing near when she was to exchange the endearing name of her parents, and substitute that of her husband, who was then to be the sole guardian and protector to her: and with the mingled emotions of love and anxiety she awaited the coming hour.

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CHAPTER XX.

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At length the morning of the anticipated day arrived. It was ushered in to the eyes of Lucy, by the bright luminary of the heavens darting his piercing rays of light through the windows of her room and reflecting on the old walls of the mansion. She felt a peculiar sensation on beholding the light of the morning of this day, as it had been predicted as big with events concerning herself, and she arose to arrange her things for the auspicious occasion.—With her thoughts still dwelling on old Lille's solemn words, that her father still lived, she took from a small case a gold necklace and chain, from which was suspended in an elegant locket the miniature of her departed mother; the cover on the back of which opened with a secret spring and displayed the features of her father, with the initials of both their names. She first gazed at one and then at the other, until she was confident that these paintings was all that remained which bore the exact resemblance of her parents, and that the original of them slept in the bosom of the tomb. This miniature was a relic, and the only valuable one that had been left by her mother. It had been consigned by her on her dying bed, into the hands of the lady of Mr. C., with a strict request to have it given to Lucy on her coming of age. It was however given to her, on the decease of her protectress, and second mother, on the day that she was committed to the silent earth, and since that period had been worn near her heart for the most part of the time, or until a week or two previous to the arrival of Cornelius and Vantor from the cruise in the privateer.—She suspended it upon her bosom, resolving it should never more leave its place near her heart, but remain with her until she sunk into the bosom of the tomb.

During the day Cornelius and Venter were uncommonly sad, and depressed in spirits; not from the prospect of the approaching nuptials, but from feelings which they could not account for. However, as the day wore away and the evening shades approached, the hurry and bustle of the house, in making preparations for the marriage ceremony, gradually dissipated the clouds of sadness which had overspread the countenance of Venter. He rejoiced that his friend Cornelius was about taking under his protection the lovely orphan of Ovando, and he brought forth the treasure which years before he had received from her deluded father, on the confines of Cedar-swamp. Not the grateful debtor when paying his friendly creditor that which misfortune had long prevented him, could excite feelings less selfish than Venter's, as he with proud satisfaction, delivered it into the hands of Mr. C. her then guardian and protector; and although Mr. C. recognized in this penitent robber of his niece, and the intrepid preserver of the life of his nephew, the once terror of the country and formidable chief of the Marauder party, he also discovered the nobleness of his soul, and the sincerity of his heart; and he felt a pride in thus beholding the happy turn of this man from the ways of his misguided days. For he had possessed a daring spirit, which was now tempered by the hand of time, and moulded by misfortune into a clear and distinct view of the ingratitude which he had shewn towards the land of his nativity; and it also gladdened the heart of Cornelius and Mr. C. to see him take the stand of justice, and resolve now to protect and enforce those laws of humanity which he had wantonly outraged when leader of the Marauder party.

The smile of joy seemed to irradiate the countenance of all at the mansion-house, as the sun sinking beyond the distant hills, told them the hour drew near that was to unite the lovely orphan. She and Lucy were in a room attiring themselves, until at length the old clock struck the hour, and they trembled; for at the instant the prophetic words of Lille

rushed upon their recollection. They were dressed for the occasion. It was the first time since the death of Almyra, her mother, that Myra had entirely thrown off the habiliments of mourning, and attired herself in the gay and fashionable costume of the times. Two elegant dresses had been presented to her and Lucy by Mr. C., and when both were arrayed in them it was difficult to tell which was the intended bride, except by the deep carnation hue which ever adorned the cheeks of Lucy, and the touching loveliness of youth and beauty which was imprinted on her countenance in dazzling lustre; while Myra displayed in the exquisite whiteness of her skin, an attraction which at once rivited the beholder, and the brightness of her dark blue eyes beamed over her countenance, expressive of the mildness of her heart, and fond nature seemed to have lavished profusely her gifts of beauty and loveliness in the exact symmetry of her person, displaying a model like some celestial being which had descended from above.

At length the family assembled in the large room of the mansion. It had been neatly fitted up for the occasion, and adorned with wreaths of evergreens, and was now brilliantly illuminated with wax tapers, making a most splendid appearance.—The holy man of God who was to unite them, had just arrived, and anxiously waited the coming of the youthful pair. Soon Venter and Lucy accompanied Cornelius and the blushing Myra into the room, where, at the altar of Hymen, she was to be bound in the silken bands of wedlock! As they approached, the trembling bride cast her eyes around the room, the dazzling splendour of which surpassed any thing of the kind she had ever witnessed before, while Cornelius portrayed an unmoved countenance. After arranging themselves, with Venter on one side and Lucy on the other, a dead silence ensued, and they stood up in the presence of the assembled friends. Not a breath seemed to disturb the solemnity of the moment, and the pious minister of the Lord was kneeling to invoke a blessing from the God of Heaven upon their nuptials, when from a side-door of

the room, in stalked the towering form of old Lille the fortune-teller. At the unexpected sight of this black sorceress, Lucy who had just raised her eyes, uttered a groan and staggered to a chair. The recollection of the prophetic words still seemed like the distant thunder sounding in her ears, "Thy sire yet lingers in the land of the living!"

Terror struck, Vantor sprung to catch the falling girl, and in the action of supporting her trembling frame to a chair, the locket which hung round her neck loosened from its chain and dropped on the floor. Vantor picked it up and casting his eyes upon the miniature, suddenly exclaimed, "Adelia!—Eternal God! The picture of my wife!" and breathless with the emotion of his feelings, he gazed wildly round the room, gasping for utterance. At this instant the lovely orphan recovered from her shock, and saw the picture of her departed mother in the hands of the Marauder chief. His wandering eyes, blazing like meteors, were then apparently devouring it with intensity of sight, when he suddenly fixed for an instant, the rolling balls upon her, and hurriedly exclaimed, "Tell me, for the love of God, where you obtained this picture, which eighteen years since I gave to the original—Adelia—the wife of my bosom?"

"It is my mother's miniature!" feebly articulated the trembling girl, as she fainting, threw herself into his arms, ejaculating "Receive your daughter!"

Vantor supported her in his arms, while pale and breathless, he again gazed round the room as if anxious to discover the meaning of what he considered a dream, when Mr. C. came forward and confirmed the words of Lucy, that the miniature was the last sad relic of her lamented mother, consigned on her dying bed to Lucy, her daughter.—She had, some eighteen years since, thrown herself on his protection, on the supposed death of her husband, and in giving birth to the infant Lucy, had paid the debt of nature. By a solemn request on her dying bed, the infant was consigned to his charge. He had adopted the tender babe, and though no ties of blood united

them, she had proved a solace to his declining years. He rejoiced that she had at length found a parent who, until this moment, was supposed to be slumbering in the arms of death. "Receive her, noble Venter," exclaimed Mr. C., "may she prove to you a child of innocence, adorned with every gem that studs the crown of virtue. The mysterious ways of Omnipotence has hid in the clouds of ignorance your child, and she knew no other parents than those his bounty provided until the present moment. As the servant of the Orphan's God, I now consign her to you, unspotted, and pure as yon bright star which gilds the heavens!"

"And am I thy father," exclaimed he, "Have I at length found thee, my daughter—child of my Adelia!" and clasping her in his arms, "Behold," continued he, opening the back of the locket, "the picture of thy father, as he once was, in days past and gone; and although the hand of time has erased from my countenance every trace of resemblance which these features now bear to the original, yet the recollection of those of thy beloved mother are still engraven on the tablet of my heart. Oh God! such were her looks—such was the angelic countenance of the virtuous and faithful Adelia, when last I saw her,"—"Yes," continued he, passionately kissing the gilded bauble, "thou wert truly what the immortal bard has recorded 'Heaven's last, best gift to man.'"

During this interesting scene, and happy meeting of the father and daughter, whom he supposed long since in the blissful realms of Heaven, with her sainted mother, Cornelius and Myra stood gazing with admiration upon them. The orphan's tears had indeed prevailed, and the companion of Myra had found in the presence of Cornelius, her father. At this instant, a demoniac laugh issued from one part of the room, and all eyes were directed to the spot. It proceeded from old Lille. Her wild eyes were upturned towards heaven and with her hands clenched, she stood like some ebony-coloured pedestal, or image, fixed as by magic against the wall.

None but Lucy had discovered her entrance into the room until this moment. Astonishment seemed for a moment to suspend the powers of respiration on all those in the room, while they gazed upon her; when suddenly her palsied head and frame shook as if agitated by the fierce blast of a tempest, and in a shrill voice she sung the two last lines of her wild stanza:—

“ Every day and every hour,

“ Hail to Necromancy’s power !”

“Infernal Sybil !” said Mr. C. as she ceased her strain. “Hence from my sight !—nor interrupt the solemnity of this occasion with thy damnable incantations !”

She uttered a horrid yell, as she received this summons to depart. Her eyes seemed bursting with rage, and like coals of fire emitted sparks of light while they appeared starting from their sockets.—Her wrinkled face and shrivelled hands appeared transparent, as the blood swelled in her veins ; and from the brilliant splendour of the lights around, her curled hair seemed tipp’d with living flame.—At length another horrid laugh burst from her, and she rubbed her dry hands together in apparent extacy, ejaculating “Infernal Sybil !—Hence !”—and her boney fingers rattled like the frozen branches of the forest-tree, encountering the wintry winds. She stalked from her situation by the wall, and fixing her wild eyes upon Lucy, moved forward a few steps in front and again halted. She extended her arm in an oratorical attitude, while every one watched her motion. Fixing her piercing eye with a more steadfast gaze upon her, she said, “ Did I not tell you that high Heaven had heard my morning and evening prayers—that the Orphan’s tears had prevailed !—I knew it, Lady ! Thy sainted mother—the angelic Adelia, shewed me the picture of thy father, while on her dying bed. I studied his countenance, and it has been engraven on my memory during the lapse of time. It was in the leader of the Marauder gang, that I saw again the impressive lines of those features which seemed ~~insculptured~~ on

the entablature of my remembrance. It was enough for me to see him once, and know that you was no longer an orphan : and I alone knew it.— But I go !—I will no longer “interrupt the solemnity of this occasion with my damnable incantations.”

As she repeated these last words, she turned her impressive features towards Mr. C., and frowning with a tremendous look, stalked out of the room with the dignity and loftiness of a princess, while a peal of thunder roared over the house and shook the building to its foundation, as the door shut her from their sight.

An explanation ensued, which was related by Lucy respecting their interview with Lille, and as soon as Vantor and she had recovered from their surprise in unexpectedly finding in each other a father and daughter, they again stood up while the holy man performed the interesting and solemn ceremony of uniting Myra and Cornelius, which now took place without further interruption. Silence reigned in the assembly, until the irrevocable words had passed his lips, and soft music then swelled upon the listening ears of the spectators. A full band struck up the song of love, as Cornelius sealed upon the lips of his bride the nuptial kiss.

Joy and festivity now spread their influence over the happy group of friends, as they each in turn embraced the beautiful Myra ; and Mr. C. came forward, and in addition to the marriage portion of his property, he presented to Cornelius the papers received from Vantor investing her with the long withheld property of her deceased father. “My children,” said he, turning to Lucy and Myra, “may you be happy in your future lives :—the one in the fond embraces of a beloved partner, and the other in the long lost, and endearing smiles of a natural and affectionate father ; and while he folded each to his heart, he shed the tear of pleasure. Never since the residence of Mr. C. in the mansion-house of his ancestors, had he experienced such genuine feelings of happiness as on this evening. He was all life and gaiety and appeared to realize that unmingled sensation

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of pure, disinterested pleasure which is the offspring of a heart truly liberal and benevolent. His adopted children were happy, and he had discharged the duty which an overruling Providence had enjoined on him to perform. Success had crowned his efforts, and bounteous Heaven had blessed his labours in all his lawful undertakings, and he felt a conscious pride that he had performed his duty towards them. As soon as decency would allow he left the gay circle of his friends and retired for the evening.

At a late hour the company separated. The next morning Cornelius and his youthful bride were to start on a journey to Vermont. They intended to take the residence of Mother Monomia in their route, and spend a day in the vicinity of the loved home of Myra's infant days : for it was near that spot that Cornelius had, in the garb of a hunter of the forest, first seen the beautiful daughter of Ovando ; and from that moment to the present, her lovely form and countenance had lived in his recollection. She was now his by holy and inseparable ties, and in her he fondly hoped to realize all the happiness which his imagination had anticipated.

CHAPTER XXI.

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Accordingly, early on the following morning they took leave of their friends at the mansion house, and started on their journey. They reached the dwelling of Mother Monomia about the middle of the day. As they neared the loved spot, every tree and bush seemed to hail her return with their nodding limbs and twigs, bowing gently in the breezes of the morning : and although the face of nature was stripped of its verdant covering, and its green mantle changed by the nipping frost of winter, yet every hill and plain around appeared lovely to her—and even the rippling waters of the Poquetanock, murmuring in sullen grandeur as it rolled along

on its rocky bed, seemed like soft music striking on her listening ear, and dazzling her eager eyes with its clear waves sparkling in the rays of the meridian sun.—They were met at the door of the good woman, by the aged matron herself, who in a transport of joy folded the lovely bride to her bosom.—The cool breeze of the morning had, like the pencil of the artist, faintly tinged her cheeks with a carnation hue, that seemed to have robbed the blushing rose of all its beauties, and rendered the natural complexion of her finely formed features, more interesting than before.

“So looked your sainted mother Almyra, when first she arrived among us,” sobbed the good old woman, while she pressed Myra to her heart, and gazed upon her with a fond delight, until almost overcome with the recollection of the past, she shed tears of pleasure on the orphan daughter of her lady Almyra, now made happy in the object of her choice. Cornelius looked in smiles on the welcome reception of Myra by her nurse and protectress Monomia, while she exclaimed, “I can now lay my head peaceably in the grave, since I have again seen my child;” and rising, she took the hand of each, and putting them together, pronounced her blessing upon them, while her uplifted eyes and lips seemed to converse with Heaven.

On the following morning they took their leave of old Monomia, and continued on their journey to Vermont. Previously, however, to Myra’s leaving the residence of her infant days, she had, in the evening, visited the grave of her mother. The retired spot had been enclosed by a neat white fence, and in the place of the rude stone which marked the rising hillock of the narrow house in which she was interred, the white cone of a marble monument, burst upon her astonished sight. Awe struck at the mournful silence which reigned around, she stood leaning upon the railing of the little yard which encircled the sacred spot of ground, when the moon, just emerging from behind a grey cloud, burst in all its splendour, and shone full on the front of the white

monument, where in gilded letters she read the following inscription :

SACRED

TO THE MEMORY OF

ALMYRA MINTURN;

Beloved in life, and in death lamented.

"The sweet remembrance of the just,
"Shall flourish though they sleep in dust."

In the utmost astonishment she stood as if transfixed, after reading this tribute of respect to the memory of her mother ; and so intensely was she absorbed in contemplating this monumental tomb of her mother's, that it was not until her feelings impelled her to open the gate and enter the yard, that she saw another stone at the right of her mother's grave, dedicated to the memory of her lamented father, on which was inscribed, likewise in characters of gold :

ERECTED

IN MEMORY OF

OVANDO MINTURN;

Weep not reader,—thou viewest the tomb of a victim misguided by treacherous arts : but in the cause of humanity he sunk.

"Sweet sleep the brave, who sink to rest."

In tears Myra read this memento of her deluded father, and almost overcome with the contending emotions of her feelings, she knelt between the monumental tomb stones of her parents, and raising her eyes towards heaven, poured out her soul before that Omnipotent Jehovah, who had bereaved her of her earthly parents ; and as she closed her short appeal to the Eternal Judge, a deep drawn sigh struck upon her ears ; and lifting up her eyes, she saw Cornelius and Mother Monomia standing before her. Speechless with gratitude, and in tears, she threw herself into their arms, when all three slowly retraced their steps to the house.

Unknown to Myra, Cornelius and Vantor had removed the body of Ovando to the side of his Almyra,

and erected over their graves the monuments she had discovered. This last act of Cornelius awakened a lasting feeling of gratitude in the bosom of Myra, which she evinced in language too plain to be misunderstood, how grateful it was to her heart. She felt now that she was no longer an unprotected orphan : for in her adored Cornelius, she had realized the fondness of a father, protector, and husband. The dark vista of futurity seemed unfolded to her view, and in it she saw the cessation of all her trials.

She was contented, for she had reached the summit of human felicity, and now felt resigned in thought, should the fell hand of adversity be again laid upon her

In safety they reached the friends of Cornelius.—His native mountains seemed to inspire him with feelings of pleasure, in which Myra participated, as he pointed out to her the towering tops of some of the lofty hills, covered with rocks and stones, where he had followed in the chase, the wild-cat of the mountain, or the growling wolf of the deep cavern. "Beneath that stupendous steep," said he, pointing to a cloud-capt mountain, "I first caught the martial notes of war. In yon deep glen, I first saw a military band,—the bulwark of my country in martial array. It was a general muster among the green mountain sons, and I accompanied my beloved father to view the noble sight. I saw them, and while every note of the thundering drum thrilled through me, my heart beat high with animation. I thirsted for glory.—I longed for the battle's din, and resolved to be a soldier !" As they passed along, Myra often shuddered as he recounted to her his hair-breadth escapes among the crags and chasms, while pursuing the wild beasts that infested his native hills, until at length they reached the house of Cornelius' father. Had the parents of Myra been raised from the bosom of the tomb to embrace their child, she could not have been received with more sincere feelings of pleasure than by the friends of Cornelius. Their coming was hailed with shouts of joy, and

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welcomed with feelings at once ardent and sincere. As the youthful pair were to spend the honeymoon with their friends in Vermont, we will now leave them and return to the mansion-house of Mr. C. in New-London.

Unexpectedly raised to the summit of human happiness in finding the daughter of his Adelia, Venter prepared to remove with her as soon as Cornelius and Myra returned. Deeply impressed with the wonderful mysteries of the Almighty, in restoring to his arms the child of his departed wife, he waited patiently for his friends' arrival, enjoying in the interesting company of his daughter, that felicity which had long been a stranger to his bosom. He could now account for his strange feelings on first beholding her. A secret impulse told him that the lovely image of Lucy was connected with his happiness, and when the veil was rent from his eyes and proof uncontrovertible, was displayed before him, of the existence of his child, he could not but acknowledge that vital principal of nature which works in the human system, and, as if by instinct, attaches congenial souls in the bonds of affection.

A month had now passed away since the nuptials of Myra and Cornelius, and they were daily in expectation of their return. The leaden wings of time slowly fluttered his pinions along, and Venter and his lovely daughter Lucy was thinking of making arrangements to leave the family of Mr. C. to settle on the delightful shores of the District of Maine, when pensive one evening, Lucy sat at the window admiring the variegated colour and uneven surface of the country around the mansion house. Not abreath seemed to disturb the tranquility of the surrounding scene. The God of Nature had wrapped in profound repose the surrounding objects, and earth, sea, and sky appeared calm, and serenely beautiful.—The distant church clock had struck the midnight hour, and the vaulted heavens sparkled with its ten thousand gems. The moon was just ascending the lofty Skyrocket hill illuminating the clouds like a pillar of fire, when she heard the distant thunder of

horses' hoofs against the ground, and soon the rattling wheels of a carriage descending the hill at the north of the house. She turned her head just as the postillion reined in his spirited steeds in front of the grand entrance of the building, and distinctly heard the driver enquire of a gentleman, if he wished to alight. But darkness enwrapped the building, not a solitary light shed its beams from the Gothic windows of the mansion. The shutters where Lucy sat were closed, and her taper standing at the farthest corner of the room, faintly cast a glimmering light upon the old walls, but emitted no ray of brightness through the latticed windows.

A voice from within the carriage bade the driver continue on, and soon the rattling of the wheels over the frozen ground died away in the distance, and all remained tranquil and quiet. Nothing now was heard but the distant howl of the watch dog, which sounded dismally amidst the solitude of night; and, on pressing her repeater, she found the midnight hour had passed some time, and the morning was fast wasting away. Who could the gentleman be that was in the carriage, thought she, arising from her seat to retire to rest. Was the person some friend of her father's or was it some relation of Mr. C.'s who had arrived, and seeing the building in darkness and thinking that all its inhabitants had retired, had probably gone to the hotel, in which direction the Post coach had driven. Various were the conjectures of Lucy, respecting the carriage which had stopped for an instant before the house; until finally wearied with thinking, she sunk into the arms of sleep, from which she awoke not till a late hour of the morning.

On awaking, the circumstance of the evening preceding, although fresh in her remembrance, did not for some time occur to her. She arose, and soon after descended to the parlour, entering the room with a light and airy step. The breakfast things were standing on the table, and at the farthest part of the room sat a gentleman, who on seeing her enter immediately arose, apologizing for startling her

by his presence alone in the room. He appeared young, although his countenance seemed warworn, and his form was dressed in the naval uniform of her country. The youthful look and hardy features, which his countenance expressed, riveted for an instant her steadfast gaze. Who was he, thought she, as she contemplated the figure of the stranger. It was the first face that had struck her sight, and elicited a feeling, different from those of the ordinary kind; and, with her face and neck suffused with blushes, she bowed; entreating him to be seated while she rang the bell for a servant to call Mr. C. or her father. Her heart fluttered as she sat waiting the entrance of her summons. The circumstance of the evening previous occurred to her. This must be the person, thought she, and with anxiety pictured in her countenance, she awaited the entrance of the gentlemen.

Mr. C. however, soon came into the room and relieved her from her embarrassment, by informing the gentleman present, that Venter would wait upon him in a few moments, and at the same time presented Lucy as the daughter of his friend. The full black eyes of the stranger sparkled, and was lit with a momentary gleam, as he raised his dark lashes, and bowed to the blushing daughter of Venter, while Lucy tremblingly answered to the unexpected introduction, and at the instant her father Venter, the Marauder chief, entered the door. Mr. C. was in the room when the gentleman was announced, who, on enquiring for the father of Lucy, he had himself went in quest of him, leaving the stranger alone in the parlour.

On the entering of Venter, it was but the first sight of these intimate friends, when quicker than lightning, they were folded in each other's arms. "Welcome to my bosom, thou ever dear companion and friend!" exclaimed Venter, as he strained him to his breast, while the stranger evinced all the genuine feelings of meeting a heart dear to him; and as the tears of pleasure started in his eyes, he ardently returned the fond embrace of the Marauder chief.

As soon as the surprise of the unexpected meeting of his old friend and bosom companion, was in some measure subsided, Venter introduced to Mr. C. and Lucy his companion and brave friend Edwin Montalbert ; one, who in days past and gone, he had seduced from the path of duty, but disdaining a life in which honour bore no share, his virtues rose superior to his employer's seducing arts, and he abandoned a gang where every vital principal of justice and right, was sacrificed on the altar of ambition and aggrandizement, in rifling his countrymen of their possessions. This Edwin was also the often mentioned Companion of cornelius. He had fought and bled with him, and when dire necessity compelled them to separate, he had followed the track of victory on the ocean, and propitious winds had just wafted himself and prize into port. He had heard of his friend's happiness in his blooming bride, and he longed to see her : for it was her, who when an infant, had been destined by him, to be separated and torn from the arms of its mother. But his feeling heart could not execute the task imposed upon him ; he could not witness the heart rending scene of a mother deprived of her first born, and he trusted to his two companions, Alascon and Talbot, as unfeeling as they were daring. It was they, who at the morning's dawn, robbed the wretched mother while he watched the proceedings of his father, and heard his breathings of vengeance upon the lawless robbers, who had rifled him of his only child. It was Edwin, who, a few weeks after, had command of the party that invaded the domestic fireside of Ovando, and drove its shattered door from its hinges ; on that eventful evening, when, as the last resort to compel the wretched Ovando to fulfil his engagements, Venter had sent his signet ring. He saw the inward workings of the father's mind, on being compelled by the laws of honour to abandon his family, and league himself with their lawless gang, and he pitied him : for although he loved Venter almost as a father, he could not but regret, and deprecate his proceedings in alluring from his country and friends, the once noble minded, but deluded Ovando.

Edwin was an orphan, and descended from the Montalbert family, who in common with many others, had fled from the iron hand of despotism in their native country, and sought a refuge in New-England. At an early age he had entered the army, and his only trade was war. Taken prisoner, he was bribed to join the Marauder party, whose lawless proceedings disgusted him, and he soon abandoned them, and entered a volunteer in the army of his beloved country. Brave to excess, his invincible courage knew no bounds. But although a lion in the fight, he was in peace like the tender lamb, passive and mild. His temper was slow to anger; but when aroused by repeated wrongs, it burst forth and increased like the tempest's force. It was then that nothing could withstand his determined bravery: for victory or death seemed alike to him, and he fought not for the former, without calmly braving the latter in all its horrors; but although when in the midst of battle, his eyes in anger appeared like the living flame, flashing insufferable brightness around; yet at the sound of mercy, his uplifted sword fell harmless and they beamed in tenderness on its object; and every feature of his countenance expressed the feelings of his heart. Such was the character of Edwin Montalbert, who then stood before them.

CHAPTER XXII.

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Soon after the introduction of Montalbert, mentioned in the preceding chapter, Lucy retired to her room. The form, face and eyes of the elegant stranger seemed continually flitting before her—she could not tell why. This then was the intrepid Edwin, of whom Cornelius had spoke in such praise. This was the youthful companion, of whom her father Vantor, had expressed the most anxious solicitude. She could not help thinking of him continually for: among the numerous visitors that had frequented the

mansion house of her adopted father, Mr. C., there was none in her eye, that possessed those fascinating charms to please and moved with that elegance, lofty dignity, and commanding attitude, like Edwin. She admired him—nay, she loved him at first sight, though she could not explain the cause—yet she had a right so to do, for, was he not the friend, and once the companion of her father; and, above all had he not saved the life of Cornelius. Gratitude then, thought she, demanded of her to respect him; and why might she not also love him. After reasoning thus for a long while with herself, she commenced her toilet. She needed no artificial means to make her appear lovely, for nature had cast her in beauty's mould, and adorned her with grace and elegance; but such is female vanity when excited, that they too often overstep the bounds of reason, and are sometimes carried too far in attempting to alter for the better. In her present feelings it was difficult for her to please herself. At length, however, she finished dressing, and descended to the parlour, seating herself at the piano.

The gentlemen had walked out, and being alone she tried all her liveliest music to exhilarate her spirits, but it was of no avail. An anxiousness she could not account for, seemed to depress her spirits; and sick with such unusual kind of feelings, she was about rising to retire to her room when she cast her eyes over her shoulder and discovered her father and the stranger Montalbert, standing gazing at her.

On seeing them, with a face suffused with blushes, she attempted to rise when her father entreated her to continue, and favor them with some favourite air. Ever mindful of her duty, and always pleased in obeying the commands of her father she promptly complied, and returned to her seat. Being somewhat agitated at first, it was with a trembling hand she struck the notes of her instrument, and Edwin gazed with wonder and delight at the beautiful girl, as she accompanied the music with the soft melody of her voice. He had heard the clarion sound of the war-trumpet, and the thundering notes of the martial drum. It had lit his eyes

with the fire of a warrior, and spurred him on to the field of battle in the dreadful fight. But the soft notes of a female voice, accompanied by the melting strains of the instrument before this lovely female, aroused the tender feelings of his heart, and he listened in rapture, until like one in a dream, he imagined himself transported beyond the narrow bounds of this transitory world—when she ceased and the melting sounds died away upon his ear, a vacuum seemed to have taken place in his being; and with a wandering eye he stared around the room—but naught attracted his attention but the beautiful musician: for she looked like some celestial being descended from the abodes of bliss, to give a foretaste to earthly mortals, of some of the sounds of that heavenly choir in the mansions of the Eternal.

A silence ensued after she had ceased playing, and powerless, the astonished Montalbert still gazed, until the blushing girl arose and departed.—Nor was it until some minutes after she had retired that Edwin could collect his scattered thoughts. He seemed to have been in a dream. It was not until this moment, that he knew the charms of music which has “power to charm the savage breast.” In a tumult of delight his mind wandered, while the soft strains still sounded in his ears, and he appeared listening, unconscious that nothing but the still air hovered around him, producing no sounds. How long he might have remained in this pleasant meditation, it is impossible to tell—he seemed absorbed and enchanted, while an involuntary movement of his hands expressed the rapture of his soul. At length the jocular voice of Vantor, aroused him from his reverie. by taxing him with an unusual absence of mind.—“Why, comrade!” said he “ten thousand batteries might be stormed before your eyes, if the enemy were aided by the siren song of a lovely girl, and in being thus spellbound, you would not recover from the shock to repel the invaders!”

“True,” exclaimed Edwin, arousing, “and ten thousand batteries might thunder from their summits, and I would face them,—(his eloquent eyes shone with brilliant splendour, while he spoke) but who can

stand unmoved, before the irresistible tones of such heavenly music as we have just heard?"

"Caught at last, by Heavens!" exclaimed Vantor, as he saw the animated countenance of his friend. "But continued he, "beware, Montalbert, there are more charms in that female than her voice. She is a gem richer than Golconda's mines,—(the image of her sainted mother arose fresh to his recollection)—she is what the virtuous Adelia was when first I saw her,—pure and spotless as the white mantle that covers the wintry plain, when first descending from the ether sky."—But observing the pensive looks of his friend, he checked his commendation of Lucy, and turned the subject, remarking that it was unlucky Cornelius should be absent just at this time, when his company was so necessary to welcome a bosom companion, and fellow soldier! At the mention of Cornelius' name Edwin recovered from his thoughts which were dwelling on Lucy, and entered into a conversation on the merits of their mutual friend, in which they were soon joined by Mr. C.

Montalbert saw no more of Lucy until evening, when he was again ravished with the sound of her melodious voice. He soon became as it were chained to the room where the music and the lovely musician, so often enraptured his soul and feasted his eyes. A feeling hitherto unfelt agitated his breast, whenever the beautiful daughter of Vantor was in his presence; and unknown to each other, quivering dart of the god of love had entered their bosoms. This mutual feeling soon ripened into the tenderest sentiment which manifested itself in every action—for, whenever they met their eloquent eyes spoke volumes; and while Vantor and Mr. C. rejoiced to see the growing affection between them, they prepared for the anticipated result of a mutual feeling, in such congenial souls. At length winter, with his icy chains had began to be unbound by the mildness of spring, and the warm showers of April were starting the vegetable world by arraying the face of nature in her green mantle, and clothing the decayed verdure of the plants and shrubs around, presenting all the primitive colours of

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the rainbow ; when Edwin, one evening, in the usual form of the fond lover, offered his heart and hand to the trembling, blushing Lucy. An offer of this kind, from this favoured one of her affections, was not long in being accepted ; and soon after a day was appointed when these chosen children of bliss were to be united.

A letter was dispatched to Cornelius and Myra, announcing the pleasing intelligence of the approaching nuptials of Lucy to one who was their friend, and who longed to embrace his old companion Cornelius. With joyful emotions, on receiving this letter, Cornelius and Myra prepared to hasten their return from Vermont, vainly conjecturing who this friend and companion was, to whom the daughter of Venter was about to be united.

The time passed heavily on with the lovers, and a fortnight had nearly elapsed since the writing of the letter to Cornelius, when Venter who had been riding out in the day, came galloping down the hill in front of the house, communicating the pleasing intelligence that Myra and Cornelius were then coming over the plain, and would shortly descend the hill.— In an instant all was bustle and confusion, and every domestic flocked to the door, to welcome their return to the mansion house. Soon the rolling wheels of the carriage brought them to the door, and they alighted. With emotions of pleasure and pride, Cornelius sprang from the carriage, handing out the lovely Myra, who was instantly encircled in the arms of Lucy, while the happy family were surrounding Cornelius, hailing his safe return among them.— The warm embrace of Venter and Mr. C., as they welcomed the safe return of Cornelius, evinced the pleasurable feelings of their hearts, while he, looking around, advanced towards Lucy, saying, “ And where is the favoured one of my ever dear friend,— must I seek him in your closet, or in the parlour ? ” and saluting her burning cheek as she disengaged herself from the warm embrace of Myra ; “ Say, my girl,” continued he, “ is he in your music drawer, or must I seek this unknown, inimitable hero of your heart, in the alcove, or bower of your garden ? ”—

"There!" answered Lucy, blushing, and pointing to Edwin, who had just heard the voice of Cornelius, and was rushing towards him, with all the feelings of his soul in his eyes.

"What!—Gracious Heaven!" ejaculated Cornelius,—“Montalbert—my friend!” and instantly he was folded to his heart. “And do I again meet you, my friend and preserver,” exclaimed Edwin, in the fulness of his overwhelming feelings. Mutual was the fond embrace of these friends, and in one short moment, they lived over the days of their companionship. Guardians of each other, the manly breast of one had shielded the other from the savage foe, which together they had encountered. Ties of gratitude bound them in adamant chains, and long were they clasped to each other’s bosoms, scared in each other’s defence. Their meeting was one ardently wished for, and one long to be remembered. Tears of pleasure burst from their bright eyes, while smiles of heart-felt rapture irradiated their countenances, which expressed the genuine feelings of their natures.

On entering the house, in a few moments, Cornelius arose and taking the hand of his Myra, presented her to Edwin. He arose at her approach, and casting his eyes full upon her, started back. She was the perfect image of her departed mother Almyra, and a crowd of recollections, which rushed upon his memory, startled him for a moment; but instantly recovering himself, he saluted the orphan daughter of his old friend and companion Ovando, and complimented Cornelius on his happiness in the possession of so much loveliness.

The remaining part of the day was spent in rehearsing a series of adventures which each had to communicate one to the other. Lucy and Myra retired to their room, and in each other’s bosom poured forth their feelings; and it was not until evening that the happy circle assembled in the large room of the mansion house. The benevolent and bountiful Mr. C. portioned off from his immense possessions, a nuptial present to his once adopted daugh-

ter, and at a late hour this joyful group of friends separated for the night.

The next day being the day appointed for the marriage of Edwin and Lucy, it was ushered in—a clear cloudless sky adorned the heavens, on this auspicious day, which was the harbinger of an event that was to crown Montalbert and Lucy with happiness; and, as everything was in readiness, on that evening they were united in the holy and inseparable bands of wedlock. Thus was Lucy and Myra both near and dear to Mr. C. blest, each with the companion of their choice, who was destined to make them happy through the remainder of their lives.

The morning after the nuptial of Edwin and Lucy, both she and Myra were somewhat shocked on hearing from old Ann, that Lille, the fortune-teller, who predicted two remarkable events in their lives, had expired at about the same hour on the evening preceeding that Edwin had espoused the daughter of Vantor, the MARAUDER.

CONCLUSION.

Some few years after the peace, and the independence of our country, which took place and was acknowledged by Great Britain, Cornelius and Myra removed to the loved spot of her nativity, where Mother Monomia came to reside with them. Vantor, Edwin and Lucy, soon after, removed to the District of Maine; and Mr. C. having sold his property in the vicinity of New-London, parted with the mansion house of his ancestors, and removed to Vermont, to spend the rest of his days with his only remaining relation, a brother.

The remainder of the Marauder party had all sailed with the army of Britain, on the ratification of the treaty of peace; each with his sealed packet, given him by their leader, on the momentuous evening of their landing on the shore of the sound. It secured to them certain lands in Canada, granted by the emissaries of Britain, to those who infested the shores of America, and harrassed the country by their lawless depredations. Merciful Heaven had cut off Ovando, the deluded partner of Vantor and Edwin, and thus scattered the rest of the gang—some of whom, notwithstanding their crimes, possessed virtues that did honour to human nature, and ever after ceased not to deprecate the life of a MARAUDER!

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